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**Reorganizations of space and culture in a car-oriented society: the case of  
Johannesburg**

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**A minor dissertation submitted in *partial fulfillment* of the requirements for the award of  
the degree of MPhil Development Studies**

**Faculty of the Humanities**

**University of Cape Town**

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## COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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Chapter 1: Introduction .....	3
Theoretical Frameworks .....	4
“The Informal City” .....	4
Consumer culture.....	5
Brief literature review of social and cultural aspects of transportation.....	6
The social psychology of material possessions .....	8
Methodology .....	9
Grounded Theory .....	9
Semiology .....	11
Overview.....	12
Chapter 2: A shifting geography in Johannesburg .....	15
Zoning: Residential development to the north and industry to the south.....	16
The history of the private car in Johannesburg .....	18
Taxi history.....	20
Chapter 3: Attitudes and perception of private car and mini-bus taxi.....	24
1.1. few positive attitudes towards taxis .....	25
1.2. Taxi drivers .....	26
1.3. Lack of Control – Taxis .....	27
1.4. Own timetable – Cars .....	28
1.5. Status .....	29
1.6. Results .....	29
Chapter 4: Car advertisement review .....	31
Toyota .....	32
Opel .....	34
BMW .....	36
Volkswagen.....	37
Advertising for public transportation .....	39
Results .....	39
Chapter 5: <i>Carscape</i> .....	41
The Absa towers .....	42
From Sandton City to Ponte City.....	44
Chapter 6: Culture of public transportation .....	46b
“ <i>Noord</i> ” .....	47
<i>Muti</i> market .....	48
Chapter 7: Conclusions .....	51b
Mobility and culture amongst taxi users .....	52
Rethinking the way we see cars and public transport .....	53
Appendix.....	55
Interview questions .....	55
Television commercials.....	59
Bibliography .....	64

## **Abstract**

This dissertation aims to identify the multi-faceted ways in which the car enabled a deep restructuring of South Africa's cultural and spatial spheres, taking Johannesburg as a context from which to extract specific insights. The two most popular modes of transportation in South Africa-the car and the minibus taxi-run on the nation's dominant system of highways and roads that came with the mass importation of the car. Because of their high usage, these two transportation modes are compared, contrasted and analyzed throughout the research. Non-instrumental factors associated with the two transport modes (i.e. a means to express oneself, social status, lifestyle and culture) are scrutinized. These factors shape transport choice and play an integral role in the relationships mobility has with space and culture. The car not only helped enable a dramatic shift in geography, but society at-large. This shift laid the groundwork for the desired lifestyle that is embodied by much of the alluring non-instrumental factors identified by respondents and the car advertisements reviewed. Conversely, this dissertation also identifies the multi-faceted ways people *without* cars participate in a car-oriented society. The layers of informality within the minibus taxi industry, its social networks, culture and spatial organizations are analyzed and compared with that of the car. Transportation studies, government papers, theories within the disciplines of sociology, cultural studies and social psychology were integrated to support the research. Using grounded theory, this study also includes personal insights from private car and public transport users. Car advertisements produced by four of the top-selling car manufacturers in South Africa were reviewed using semiotic analysis and compared with participant responses. Rather than offering a theoretical solution to a car-oriented society, this dissertation offers a way to rethink the geography, lifestyle, culture, institutions, spaces and people associated with the private car and public transport. Ultimately, this may contribute to how a more positive characterization of public transport can be achieved.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

The car must be a topic of interest for sociologists because of its tremendous effects on the world. Remarkably, everyone on the planet has been affected by this technology.

Mette Jensen quotes author, Per Otones,

Usually, geography and physical nature...will restrict or fashion social practices. With the car it's the other way around: Like no other, this mobile technological product has transformed others, even real estate and geography, on a scale unsurpassed in history.<sup>1</sup>

Because of the car's significant impact on the world, I aim to explore the following two questions: How did the mass importation of the automobile contribute to the spatial reorganizations of Johannesburg's landscape? How did the automobile, as a *desiring machine*, influence reorganizations of culture in Johannesburg? When Johannesburg adapted the economics of Fordism during its industrialization, the car became a mechanism that helped enable reorganizations of space and culture during this tremendous societal shift. If, in its brief history, the early emergence of the car is symbolic of a modern, Fordist cultural logic, then the globalization of the car as it was experienced in Johannesburg represents a deep spatial and cultural restructuring. While Fordism favored assembly-line labor, urban manufacturing zones, and the mass production of identical goods, Post-fordism favored flexibility, the diversification of products and an increasingly global economy. Moving into the 1970s the principles of Fordism were slowly phased out in favor of Post-fordism. Following Post-fordism's logic, the automotive industry then shifted its modes of production in favor of flexibility, dispersal and decentralization. This is echoed in the spatial reorganizations found across Johannesburg.

From mobilities to land use, the new Johannesburg would become more ephemeral, adaptable, and flexible than ever before. Tracing the historical unfoldings of the car, this investigation explores traces of this reorganization. Each reorganization resonates with the cultural logic of late capitalism in that they are more flexible, tenuous and amorphous. The car enabled a new consumer culture; it engendered informal economies like the taxi industry; it is a *desiring machine*. The car symbolizes freedom on a multiplicity of levels: the car as freedom of movement; free markets; freedom of

consumer choice and customization; the car runs on a system of *freeways*. However, the modernist promise of freedom, utopia and orderly mobility exploded onto the developing world as utter chaos. This freedom promised and packaged within the modernist order resulted in a good dose of postmodern delirium.

## **Theoretical Frameworks**

### **“The Informal City”**

Sociologists have traditionally defined informality by what formality is not. It is often defined as a byproduct of a formal system or as a marginal system. Furthermore, literature on informality is largely concentrated on informality as it relates to economics. Michel Laguerre explicitly attributes this school of thought to the legacy of modernity. He argues that under modernity progress was achieved through the rational ordering of society. He justifies this by explaining that the philosophy driving the Enlightenment period was “emancipation through reason.” Addressing this tradition of informality, Laguerre defines his alternative theory of the informal city:

It is my view that informality permeates every aspect of the functioning society. It is a vast realm – a multiplicity of niches- where human beings place themselves, either prior to the advent of an imposed formal system or within the nooks and crannies of the formal societal system. They do so in order to deal effectively with the routine issues of everyday life. Informality is a structure of action that contains both harmonious (adaptation) and contradictory (resistance) relationships. It is a site of power in relation to external disciplinary and control power.<sup>2</sup>

While formality is defined by law or the societal ‘status quo,’ informality is defined by deregulated acts or acts of resistance to the formal system. Informality adapts and resists the dominance of formal systems. Furthermore, in identifying informality, Laguerre argues that one must investigate topics such as: its origin; the relationship between the formal and informal; who is involved in both the formal and informal; time and space factors; the meanings of everyday practices; the structural location of informal practices in relation to other practices.<sup>3</sup> Informal spaces are places in which one can learn not only about economics and politics, but also the culture and identities of those who participate in informality. ‘Informality’ asserts its importance in the culture of public transportation because of its tremendous presence within the industry. The taxi industry is a multi-layered system of with ‘informality.’ Many of the business owners in and around taxi ranks, social practices, policing practices and economics of the industry



can be considered 'informal.' As a multi-layered system of 'informality,' what knowledge is present within the taxi industry? What kinds of social practices do people who use taxis engage in? Laguerre argues that informal spaces

...provide an infrastructure for the learning, use and transmission of informal knowledge. It provides a framework, a terrain for the expression of such knowledge. It is the locus where one learns the mechanisms for one's socialization in the world of informal practices, of behind-the-scene strategies and of differences in self-management style between formal and informal behaviors. Informal space allows one to defy, adjust to or reinforce the formal system of power.<sup>4</sup>

Laguerre's approach challenges the use of hierarchical thinking where the formal is important and the informal is unimportant. In this sense, it is a "bottom-up" approach at theorizing urban informality. Alternatively, Laguerre sees the informal and formal as 'interdependent systems, which share a common reality and feed each other's existence.'<sup>5</sup>

## **Consumer culture**

At a very basic level, consumer culture is fueled by needs, and these needs are fulfilled through consumption. There are a plethora of approaches to theories of consumption from various disciplines including sociology, psychology, anthropology and economics. Nonetheless, all of these approaches to theories of consumption are grounded in an analysis of industrialization, which initiated dramatic changes upon society.

Part of these changes was the increasing consciousness that *who somebody is* and their social position are not necessarily fixed and inherited any longer. The rise of individualistic awareness is particularly pronounced during the early decades of the industrial revolution. Identity is no longer group-based but *achieved* by the individual herself or himself. An important element of such *achieved* identity appears to be the acquisition of material possessions and wealth.<sup>6</sup>

Therefore the mass consumption of goods became the new mechanism by which people acquired social status, displayed values and identified. Jacques Gervais explains that with this model 'choices are not made at random, but are socially controlled and reflect the cultural model within which they are made. It is not just any old goods, which are produced or consumed: they must have some meaning with regard to a system of values.'<sup>7</sup> This dissertation will look at consumer culture in Johannesburg

and explore the system of values associated with the car as well as the institutions, neighborhoods, housing and networks that share the same values.

Today consumption is still part and parcel of creating an identity, defining social groups and status. Material possessions such as cars, clothes, food, cell phones, tekkies, computers and mp3 players make a tremendous contribution to one's identity. They can symbolize social status, social class, sexual orientation, subcultures, ethnicity, counterculture, etc. The brands and monetary value of material possessions say a great deal about a person. Lack of material possessions can be social suicide. As a costly material possession, cars arguably contribute to a large part of one's identity.

Furthermore, I argue that the car is a desiring machine. It makes and enables car owners to desire and consume. Subsequently, taxi users are denied participation in the creation of an identity attached to the automobile and its complex culture, associations, ideologies and social networks. However, taxi users continue to create and maintain an identity that is informed by the taxi industry's own culture and social networks. This dissertation hopes to outline a part of that reality. Unlike car culture, taxi culture does not operate with the same desiring mechanism the car has. The taxi has its own social networks, culture and values. Resistance, informal practices, creativity, adaptation and survivalist acts characterize a part of taxi culture and identity. In addition, the taxi industry plays a historically progressive role as one of the very first black economic empowerment enterprises in South Africa. Likewise, the taxi industry has been recognized for its political activism during the bus boycotts under apartheid. These precedents have at the very least, a prominent place within the historical and political identity of the taxi industry.

### **Brief literature review of social and cultural aspects of transportation**

Much of the taxi literature reviewed concentrated on topics such as the political history of the industry and the different types of violent acts associated with the industry. The studies that look at taxi violence examined a number of different subtopics such as road rage, violent territorial wars and road accidents. Diana Binge's comparative study between taxi drivers and light motor vehicle drivers looks at the causes and incidents of road rage (Binge 2003). As a form of urban violence, taxi violence is described by Leah

Gilbert as “an industrial conflict due to fierce competition and attempts at economic survival.”<sup>8</sup> Likewise, there is a wealth of literature that discusses the taxi industry’s highly politicized history. Authors discuss the origins of the taxi industry, and the events they argue led to the alarming levels of violence within it. Jackie Dugard argues that deregulation by the government in 1987 was a deliberate political move by the apartheid government to destabilize the black-owned industry (Dugard 2001). Similarly, Meshack Khosa looks at three case studies of taxi violence over time, concluding that taxi violence is caused by a defense of routes and ranks (Khosa 1991).

While this literature is surely important, I found the literature most relative to the research undertaken in this dissertation to be the studies that looked at non-instrumental factors surrounding public transportation and public transportation culture. However, I was unable to find literature that discussed these topics as applied to the South African taxi industry. The relevant literature reviewed were case studies that discussed these topics within different cities in Western Europe including Porto, Groningen, Rotterdam and Copenhagen (Beirao and Cabral 2007; Steg 2004; Jensen 1999). Mette Jensen employs a sociological analysis of transport behavior in Copenhagen. Her research topics are how transport has become part of everyday life, transport behavior, attitudes towards transport, environmental consciousness and transport as integrated into modern culture. Jensen argues that the car has a central role in social and cultural life. Therefore, those who wish to reduce car usage in favor of public transportation and or non-motorized transport must study such topics in order to provide a complete picture of the reasons for modal choice. Her discussion on motoring’s cultural impact on society demonstrates why public transportation is often a hard sell within such a car-dominated society.

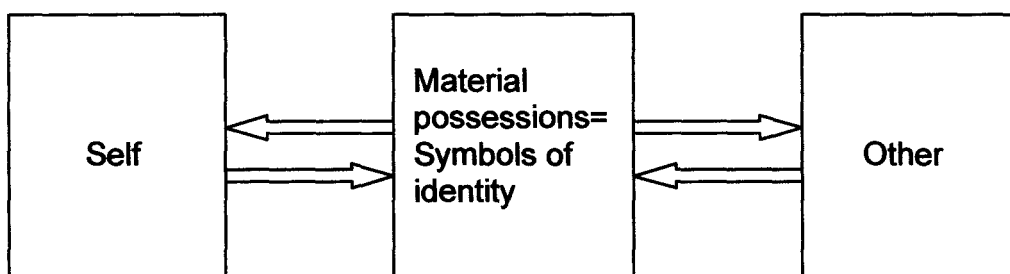
Similarly, an urban transportation study of Porto, Portugal qualitatively compared attitudes towards public transportation and private car (Beirao and Cabral 2007). The authors argue that if we can identify both instrumental and non-instrumental reasons for modal choice we can create transport policies to address them, and perhaps find a way to make public transport more desirable while reducing car usage. Borrowing from the literature reviewed, fieldwork and a combination of theories and methodologies I was

able to piece together an analysis of the taxi industry from a social, cultural and spatial perspective.

### The social psychology of material possessions

Helga Dittmar, a social psychologist, theorizes that material possessions represent both instrumental values as well as symbolic values. This theory is closely related to the sociological approaches to consumption just discussed, but takes a deeper look into the relationship between material possessions, the self, and the other. Taking the car as an example, she explains that the car has a role outside of a “utilitarian means of transport.” She points to car advertisements, which are ‘laden with *cultural meanings* and *images*, rather than merely emphasizing the practical and functional utility of the vehicle itself.’<sup>9</sup>

Dittmar argues that a social psychological ‘understanding of what material possessions means has to include *shared beliefs* and *values*, and *has to* investigate them within *the fundamental triadic unit of self, other and material objects*.’<sup>10</sup> According to Dittmar, literature about the social psychology of material possessions maintains a focus on the individual. In that vein, Dittmar proposes to supplement the individual focus with possessions as *symbols of identity*.<sup>11</sup> Using her theory, material possessions then become an extension of one’s identity. She offers the following illustration of the theory:



It is this communicative aspect of material objects that must be investigated in order to understand why it is supremely important for people to convey the *right* messages about themselves to others through their possessions. It is also argued here that possessions symbolize not only the personal qualities of individuals, but also the groups they belong to and their social standing generally.<sup>12</sup>

Taken together, as a material possession the car can be categorized into its *instrumental* functions: speed, frequency and mobility and its *non-instrumental* functions: social status, social groupings; what I want people to think of me, what this material possession says about my identity; what I think of others with X material possession.

## **Methodology**

### **Grounded Theory**

This qualitative study uses “grounded theory” as its methodology for the interviews section of the research.<sup>13</sup> Because of the highly exploratory nature of the dissertation, I found grounded theory to be an appropriate methodology. Compared to other research methods, grounded theory aims to discover what theory accounts for the research situation as opposed to testing a hypothesis. Initially, notes were taken down about the first interview. The notes of each subsequent interview were compared to the previous notes. Altogether, the emerging trends, hypothesis and ideas that come from the data are analyzed and compared to other literature relating to similar topics. The data was then coded based on recurrent themes within the collective responses.

Using grounded theory, sampling cannot be determined in advance of data collection because sampling decisions must be theoretically informed and therefore await the emergence of a guiding theory.<sup>14</sup> The initial interview participants were chosen using the “snowball” method, and were conducted over the course of a month. As trends emerged from the interviews more data was collected. After the initial interviews, it became necessary to obtain more data from particular demographics that may shape transport choice such as transport users with children and people in older age groups. The questionnaire consisted of open-ended questions informed by an extensive literature review. The topics covered in the questionnaire include non-instrumental factors that influence transport choice, how the spatial organization of a car-oriented city affects daily life, attitudes towards public transport, as well as the culture surrounding the car and public transport.

At first, it was difficult to formulate interview questions, as there have not been many comparable transportation studies that concentrate on the relationship between mobility,

culture, space and the political economy in South Africa. Also, this dissertation uses the social psychology of material possessions and theories of consumer culture, which both share the premise that there are values associated with possessions. In trying to illicit responses while considering these theories people seemed hesitant to associate the car or taxi with specific values. Respondents were more open about speaking of the values they thought others had with the opposing form of transportation than speaking of values they had with their own regular means of transport.

In Gauteng, the two most frequently used modes of transport are private cars (25% of the population) and mini-bus taxis (32% of the population).<sup>15</sup> Because of this interviews were conducted with 17 participants ages 17-57, who use these modes of transport for their most regular journey. There were 7 males and 10 females respondents. The data was organized and analyzed using grounded theory and attitudes theory. The responses provide a snapshot of personal experience from users of these modes, and are not meant to be a representative sample of Johannesburg. While some public transport users utilize a number of modes including train, bus and taxi, all relied on taxis for their most regular journeys. All of the car users used only their car as their regular mode of transport with one exception. One respondent used taxis for work, and his car for other journeys. Because of this he was classified as both a taxi and car user. Therefore 9 respondents were classified as taxi users and 9 were classified as car users. Twelve common questions were asked of users of both modes of transport regarding both taxis and private cars. An additional five questions were asked regarding the respondents' regular transport mode.

The users of public transport in Johannesburg are by and large African. Because of this, a person that is proficient in several South African languages assisted in collecting data. Eight of the interviews were held in-person. Four interviews were held over the phone, and five used email. In-person interviews allowed for more spontaneity, and the opportunity to engage in tangents. Interviews done over the phone also allowed for open-ended discussions, but were generally briefer than the in-person interviews. The interviews over email allowed the respondent to view the list of questions, and answer them in their own time. Once they emailed their responses, I continued to ask questions via email in order to allow these respondents the same open discussion the other

setups allowed for. In-person interviews took an average of 30 minutes. Phone interviews took 15-20 minutes. The email correspondence was conducted over two days. Please refer to the appendix for the questionnaire.

From the onset of the interviews my intention was to focus on the non-instrumental factors that all the respondents recognize exist. However, unpacking the non-instrumental responses with interview participants proved to be quite difficult. I could sincerely relate when I discovered that authors doing work on similar topics also encountered this problem. 'A study by Steg et al. (2001) revealed that symbolic-affective motives are better expressed when the aim of the research task is not too apparent. If respondents are asked to explicitly evaluate the attractiveness of various car use aspects, they especially mention instrumental aspects.'<sup>16</sup> For example, all of the car user respondents of this study recognized that cars symbolize status, but they often prefaced that by saying, cars are not completely definitive of one's status. This is perhaps because a person does not want to seem shallow or materialistic. Steg et al. suggest framing the research aims to participants in a more abstract way so as to illicit non-instrumental factors.

## **Semiology**

Semiology is a complex theory, but put very simply is the study of signs. There are a number of scholars that have slightly varying approaches to semiotic analysis including linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure. Using Saussure's model, the sign is divided into the "signifier" and the "signified." The "signifier" is the form which the sign takes; and the "signified" is the concept it represents."<sup>17</sup> Semiotic analysis can be applied to a number of different mediums such as advertising, film and print. There are countless symbols within an advertisement, and together these symbols create a unique language.

It [semiotics] unpacks how signage gains meaning, how signage is a system of coded symbols that produce a distinct language. Language according to the pioneer in this field Saussure, being 'one of many systems of meaning' - others including body language, posture facial expressions, clothes worn etc.<sup>18</sup>

The aim of semiology is communication via symbols, which is organized into languages and codes. The concept proposes that there is a dyadic relation between the signifier

and the signified, which leads to multiples levels of meaning and metalanguage.<sup>19</sup>

Accordingly, the levels of meaning are organized as such:

The lowest level involves *denotation*, that is a simple relation between signifier and signified. Higher levels involve *connotation* in which the denotation itself becomes a signifier or *metalanguage* in which the denotative relationship between the signifier and signified becomes the signified. In other words, a sign that denotes at one level becomes a connotative signifier and signified metalanguage at the next highest level.<sup>20</sup>

The theory of semiology was methodically applied to recent television advertisements of the four highest-selling car manufacturers in South Africa: Toyota, Opel, BMW, Volkswagen.<sup>21</sup> The models chosen were the top-selling models of these car manufacturers. The sources of the commercials were found on the car manufacturers' South African website and [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com). Notes were taken on a scene-by-scene basis for each commercial.<sup>1</sup> Upon reviewing the notes of each scene, binary meaning oppositions (the signifier and the signified) that recurred throughout the commercial were labeled and identified. In addition, each commercial was questioned using the following criteria: an analysis of syntactical patterns; noting literary devices such as metaphors, metonyms, similes, genre and tropes; who created the advertisements, and what were their aims? What kind of system does the language of the commercial operate? Finally, printed and electronic secondary resources were used as a large part of this dissertation. The remainder of the research was acquired through observation and analysis.

## Overview

To begin with, Chapter 2 discusses the theories that this dissertation largely relies on. This includes theories on informality as this asserts its importance within the taxi industry. Helga Dittmar's theory on the social psychology of material possessions defines the differences between instrumental and non-instrumental factors of material possessions, and the relationship material possessions have with the self. Similarly, consumer culture explains how the consumption of goods becomes the mechanism by which people identify and acquire status in an industrialized society. Chapter 3 details the methodological processes this dissertation implements. Grounded theory and

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<sup>1</sup> Please refer to the appendix for notes taken for each commercial.



principles of interviewing are used for the interview portion of this dissertation.

Semiology is applied to the analysis of the car advertisements reviewed. Chapter 4, "A shifting geography in Johannesburg" discusses how modernization changed the geography of the city, requiring the dramatic increase in automobiles. The car fiercely restructured new landscapes and spatial practices. This restructuring meant that those whom previously used buses, trains or trams had to find a way to navigate the city given its new car-oriented geography of freeways. Because the large majority could not afford to purchase a car-the only form of transport that is wholly capable of navigating this system, the taxi industry of the late 1970s was created to fulfill the need for more affordable transportation that utilizes the dominant system of freeways. Also, the economic history of the taxi industry is discussed to give insight into its 'informal' past. Furthermore, it utilizes Michel Laguerre's theories on informal spaces to look at the informal industry's inherently shifting boundaries and subsequent changing definitions.

Next, the interviews included in Chapter 5, "Attitudes and perceptions of the private car and mini-bus taxi," consist of seventeen semi-structured interviews with users of mini-bus taxis (classified as public transportation) and private car (classified as private transportation) for their most regular journey. These responses are meant to provide a snapshot of insight rather than serve as a representative sample of city residents. The content of the interviews concentrates on the non-instrumental factors of the two transport modes as these highlight the ways in which the car has restructured personal identity and values, as well as restructured lifestyle, networks and places given its tremendous reorganizations.

Because television is a text loaded with cultural meaning, a review of car advertisements is included in this study. Commenting on television's impact on society, Roger Silverstone claims, 'Television is the frame par excellence of our culture.'<sup>22</sup> Using semiotics analysis, Chapter 6 "Car advertisement review," dissects the coded language of car commercials. The advertisements are filled with symbolism, and work within a system that values capitalism, wealth, luxury, competition, freedom, flexibility and status. Finally, the responses of Chapter 5 were compared and contrasted with the results of the analysis of the car advertisements reviewed. Chapter 7: "Carscape" reinforces sociologists' theories on consumer culture and modernization's effect on the

landscape of the third world. It discusses the “automonster” as the beast inextricably attached to the car that creates the specific networks, places, and residences that are valued in car commercials, and considered essential to the reproduction of the middle and upper classes of Johannesburg. Finally, I found that of all the issues discussed in this dissertation the topics included in Chapter 8: “Culture of public transportation” contained the least literature. While many sociologist and cultural theorists discuss the middle class lifestyle and culture surrounding the car, I found few sources that discuss these topics as related to public transportation. While the mass importation of the car necessitated a meticulously planned system of highways, networks, and residences for car owners it also decimated local market spaces, turned neighborhoods into roads and fractured social networks through its tremendous divisions of space. Yet, miraculously unplanned parallel systems like the taxi industry itself and the spaces, networks and culture that surround it still manage to evolve in the midst of the dominant and imposing car-oriented society. These parallel systems are considered informal, and are sites of resistance. They are examples of how those without access to the private car have adapted to the car-oriented culture and geography of Johannesburg.

Altogether, this identification of the paradigmatic shift that took place in Johannesburg through the car and the intricate political-economy to which the car is wed, presages perhaps yet another deep restructuring. Currently, the automotive industry begins to reposition and reorganize in response to the global economic crisis. Perhaps the most striking symbol of this is the decline of a number of automakers, including General Motors, the world’s second largest car manufacturer. If, as Daniel Miller suggests, ‘[the automobile has] become an integral part of the cultural environment with which we see ourselves as human,’ Johannesburg offers a compelling account of how the car has remarkably shaped culture, identity, space and time.<sup>23</sup> Remarkably, today we are at a crossroads in which we are able to learn from the mistakes of the past, and can again imagine mobility during the current historical alignment of the car and the global economy.

## Chapter 2: A shifting geography in Johannesburg

Eduardo Vasconcellos argues that when third world countries adapted the system of Capitalist modernization, the physical landscape changed. Furthermore, he claims the essential mechanism needed to navigate this landscape is the automobile.

The reshaping of urban space [under Capitalist modernization] corresponded to a new lifestyle, characterized by new, increasingly complex, patterns of consumption and social relations. People's daily activity networks have increased and diversified, with new destinations at often greater distances. This diversification occurred within all personal networks, as capitalist modernization has transformed all social and economic life: in Sao Paulo, this change led to a 122% increase in the average number of motorized daily trips between 1967 and 1977, as opposed to a 45% increase in population.<sup>24</sup>

Through the prized automobile one can access social and economic networks that correspond to a particular lifestyle. This makes the automobile an essential mechanism for the social reproduction of those whom maintain that lifestyle, i.e. "the middle class." Hence, Vasconcellos' central argument is that the middle class drives the demand for cars in the third world. The author argues that 'to 'be' a middle class citizen requires the performance of a set of new (commodified) social, cultural and economic activities, whose time-space optimization relies on the car...the attempt to perform these activities by bus (or non-motorized means) would result in disaster.'<sup>25</sup>

The author observes in the Brazilian case that there is a direct correlation between mobility and income: the higher the income the higher the rates of mobility. Focusing in on the relationship between strictly motorized trips and income reveals an even starker contrast in mobility rates between those in the upper income brackets versus lower income brackets. Mobility rates are four times higher for those in the upper income brackets than those in the low-income brackets.<sup>26</sup> Likewise, according to the National Union of Metalworkers in South Africa (NUMSA), in 2003 about 33 percent of new vehicles sold in South Africa cost more than R200 000, while the average income for South Africans was R74 589.<sup>27</sup> In addition, the cheapest and most basic new model of the ten most popular cars in South Africa is the Volkswagen Citi at a retail price of R 74, 400.<sup>28</sup>

Using the third world as a context makes Vasconcellos' explanation of its urban geography quite unique. While there have been other authors that look at the sociological factors of urban transportation in the first world, (see Davis 1990, 2000, 2006; Flink 1970,1988; Martin Wachs and Margaret Crawford ed. 1992) there are few studies of this nature about third world cities.<sup>29</sup>

### **Zoning: Residential development to the north and industry to the south**

Taking Vasconcellos argument into consideration, an overall look at the planning and shaping of Johannesburg is necessary. The densification of industrial zones in the south of the city and residential zones in the north made a significant contribution to Johannesburg's landscape. The idea of Fordism: mass production leads to mass consumption, and overall sustained economic growth was part and parcel of the capitalist economic growth model of industrialization. With the advent of World War II South Africa's economy dramatically expanded, leading to a growth of industrial zones already in existence in the south.<sup>30</sup>

the area of Industria and the old mining zone to the south of the CBD. There was also a narrow band of industries on either side of the main east-west railway route (particularly on the eastern side of town), with many small industrial concerns in the area of city and suburban south-east of the CBD.<sup>31</sup>

On the other hand, residential density in and towards the northern suburbs of Johannesburg appeared c.1911 due to the construction of electric-powered northern lines with stations in Norwood, Parktown and Rosebank. 'Thus by 1955 the main functional zones of the Witwatersrand were characterised by substantial residential development north of the old mining land, with pockets of industrial and commercial space generally close to the interface between the mining land and the northern developments.'<sup>32</sup> Furthermore,

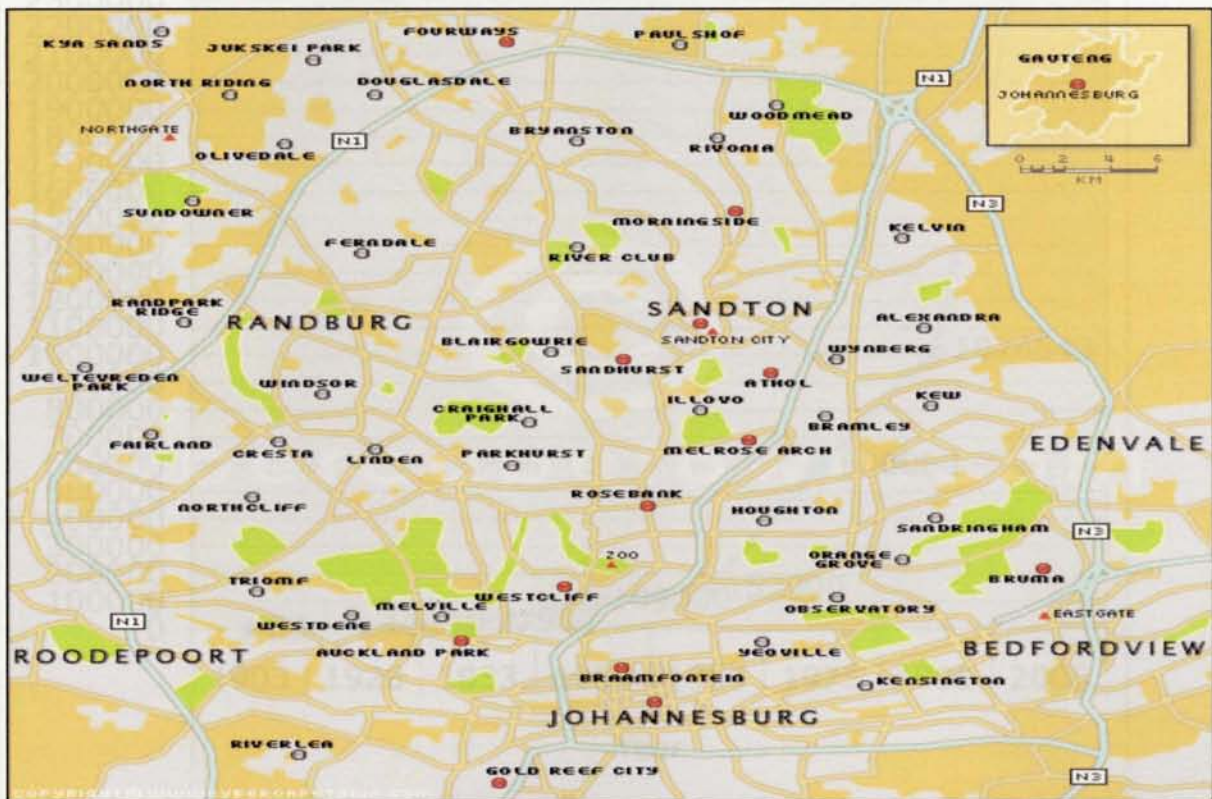
the early appearance (in 1897) and rapid increase in private motor cars after the First World War, one of the most visible trappings of the wealthy and better-off citizens, further enhanced the attractiveness of the northern suburbs for the higher-income groups who could reach downtown with increasing ease using either public or private transport.<sup>33</sup>

Economically and socially, the war had a profound effect on Johannesburg's physical landscape.

While gold continued to be the most important industry, providing two-thirds of South Africa's revenues and three-quarters of its export earnings, manufacturing grew enormously to meet wartime demands. Between 1939 and 1935, the number of people employed by manufacturing, many of them African women, rose 60 percent. Urbanization increased rapidly: the number of African town dwellers almost doubled. By 1946 there were more Africans in South Africa's towns and cities than there were whites. Many of these blacks lived in squatter communities established on the outskirts of major cities like Cape Town and Johannesburg.<sup>34</sup>

The World War II period proves to be an impetus for massive changes in the city. Therefore, as Vasconcellos suggests, a dramatic period of industrialization changed the landscape of third world cities to cater to the car as proven in the case of Johannesburg. During this time the city became marked by polarization: Northern, white and middle/upper-class residential zones; a southern industrial buffer zone; black, impoverished sprawling residential zones surround the white city center. As the city's boundaries increasingly sprawled outward, this created another form of polarization: decreased use of trams and trains, and an increased use of private car.

Figure 1. Map of Johannesburg



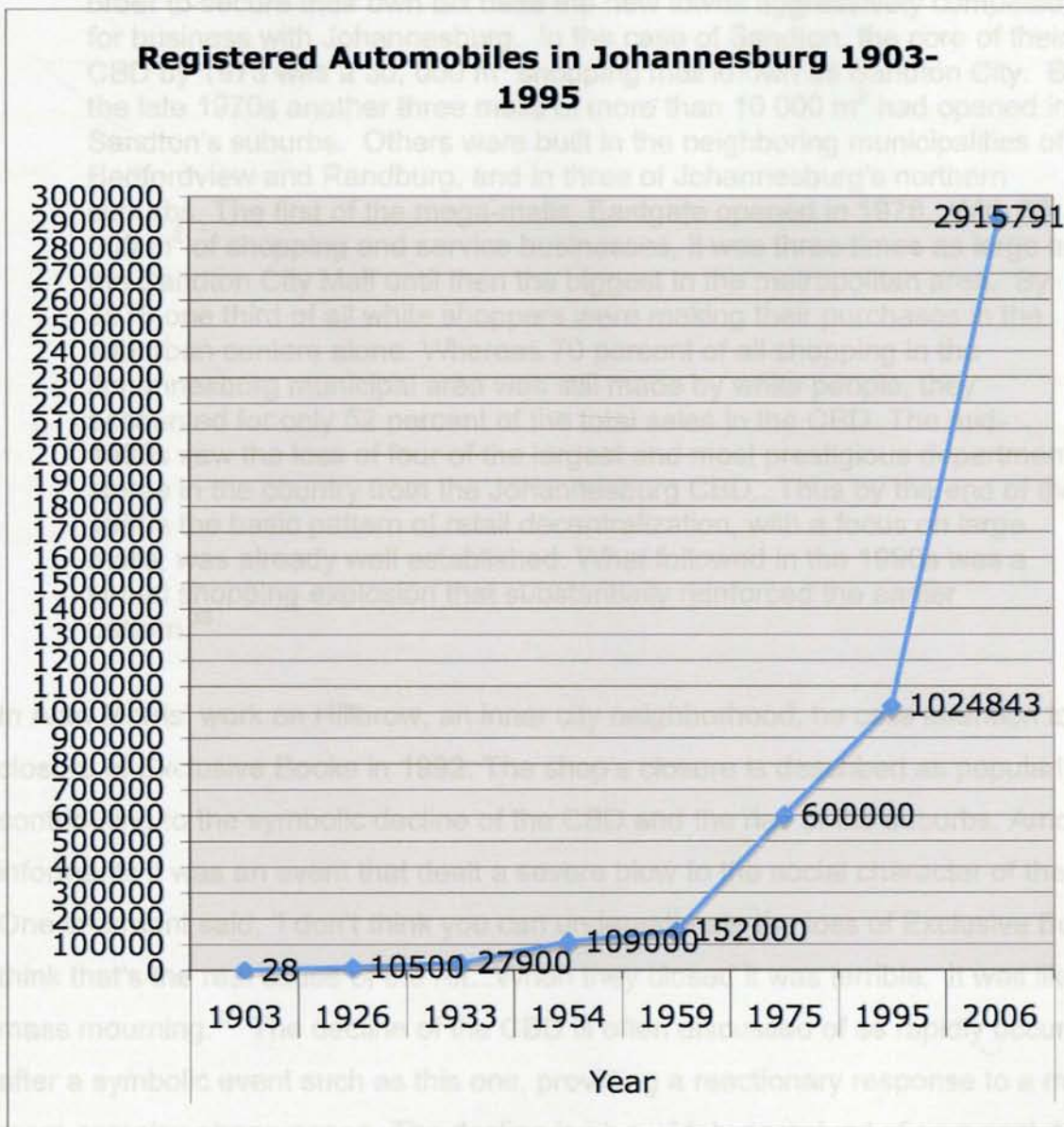
Source: Unknown. [Online] Available: [http://cybercapetown.com/Maps/images/jhb\\_suburbs.gif](http://cybercapetown.com/Maps/images/jhb_suburbs.gif)



## The history of the private car in Johannesburg

The history of the automobile in Johannesburg clearly corresponds to major political and economic events as well as dramatic changes to the geography of the city. With this massive expansion came an increase in car-ownership.

From a paltry 28 motor vehicles registered in Johannesburg in 1903 there were 10 500 by 1926. Ownership continued to grow rapidly, reaching 27 900 in 1933 and just over 109 000 in 1954. A mere five years later the figure was almost 152 000 and by the mid 1970s there were some 600 000 motor vehicles in Johannesburg.<sup>35</sup>



Source: K.O.S Beavon, 1999/[www.joburg.co.za/](http://www.joburg.co.za/) Department of Transport, 2008.

In the twenty-year period between 1975 and 1995 there was a 58 percent increase in the number of registered vehicles. That is an average of 21 242 newly registered vehicles per year.

Soon to follow northward residential expansion was business and retail. Beavon insists that by 1959 there was already a migration pattern of businesses moving from the CBD to the suburbs.

... The state created two new municipalities, Sandton and Randburg, in what at the time was the periphery of Johannesburg's northern areas. In order to secure their own tax base the new towns aggressively competed for business with Johannesburg. In the case of Sandton, the core of their CBD by 1973 was a 30, 000 m<sup>2</sup> shopping mall known as Sandton City. By the late 1970s another three malls of more than 10 000 m<sup>2</sup> had opened in Sandton's suburbs. Others were built in the neighboring municipalities of Bedfordview and Randburg, and in three of Johannesburg's northern suburbs. The first of the mega-malls, Eastgate opened in 1978. With 90 000 m<sup>2</sup> of shopping and service businesses, it was three times as large as the Sandton City Mall until then the biggest in the metropolitan area. By 1978 one third of all white shoppers were making their purchases in the suburban centers alone. Whereas 70 percent of all shopping in the Johannesburg municipal area was still made by white people, they accounted for only 52 percent of the total sales in the CBD. The mid-1980s saw the loss of four of the largest and most prestigious department stores in the country from the Johannesburg CBD... Thus by the end of the 1980s the basic pattern of retail decentralization, with a focus on large malls, was already well established. What followed in the 1990s was a virtual shopping explosion that substantially reinforced the earlier pattern.<sup>36</sup>

In Alan Morris' work on Hillbrow, an inner city neighborhood, he calls attention to the closure of Exclusive Books in 1992. The shop's closure is described as popularly contributing to the symbolic decline of the CBD and the rise of the suburbs. Amongst his informants it was an event that dealt a severe blow to the social character of the city. One informant said, 'I don't think you can underestimate the loss of Exclusive Books. I think that's the real cause of the rot... When they closed it was terrible. It was like a mass mourning.'<sup>37</sup> The decline of the CBD is often discussed of as rapidly occurring after a symbolic event such as this one, providing a reactionary response to a much more complex phenomenon. The decline is also widely perceived of as a post-1994 event, which is likewise marked by a symbolic move such as the relocation of the Johannesburg Stock Exchange from the CBD to Sandton City in 1998. Although

opinions about these events provide valuable insight into the populations' psyche, the decentralization of Johannesburg should be combined with a documented history. Doing so provides a timeline of what was roughly a 70-year process. The city's residential, industrial and commercial outward expansion undeniably necessitated the car as the most practical means of transport. As trams and buses became less practical, those without access to a car managed to find mobility through the taxi industry.

## **Taxi history**

According to Beavon, the mini-bus taxi service is said to have began in Johannesburg around the late 1970s with only a handful of taxis. The service 'fulfilled a desperate need for reasonably inexpensive but rapid commuter transport between African townships and particular nodes in the city, and between them and other nodes in Johannesburg.'<sup>38</sup> Up until 1987, the historically black-owned business was largely 'informal' due to the discriminatory practices of the apartheid government, which made it extremely difficult for taxi operators to obtain permits. At the time, the Local Road Transportation Board (LRTB) rejected 90% of taxi permit application.<sup>39</sup> As a result black taxi operators operated illegally. In Laguerre's discussion of informality as a way of life, he explains that

Human life is recognized as having both formal and an informal side. At the individual level, informality is understood here as a way of life. At the personal level, it is a reflection of human freedom, an implicit or explicit choice that an individual actor makes to locate himself or herself in a retreat position *vis-à-vis* the formal apparatus of society.<sup>40</sup>

As a political and economic act of resistance and survival, taxi operators chose to engage in informal practices as a response to the formal regulation of the industry. For roughly 10 years the taxi industry operated informally. Finally the White Paper on Transport Policy of 1987 along with the Transport Deregulation Act of 1988 deregulated the taxi industry, making the established informal industry legal. According to Laguerre, 'the changing legal definition of formality leads necessarily to the shifting boundaries of informality.'<sup>41</sup> Due to its perpetually morphing boundaries, informal systems are a social construction that changes in accordance with the formal system. They welcome or reject the formal system, and adapt accordingly.



This turn of events turned out to be a double-edged sword for the black community. Since permits were no longer a major obstacle, aspiring businessmen looking to run a taxi service over-saturated the market. Competition for routes and passengers became fierce practically overnight. Furthermore, Sekhonyane and Dugard argue that 'corrupt officials...turned a blind eye to traffic enforcement and vehicle roadworthiness, meaning that from the outset, issues of safety and security were sidelined.'<sup>42</sup> While the deregulation of the industry opened up doors for black businessmen, it also created an utterly chaotic environment for the industry. The business became violent and politically contentious, a legacy that continues today. Some argue that the violent and chaotic turn of events due to the deregulation of the taxi industry was very much intentional.

The sudden deregulation of transport became a means of complementing the state's broader destabilization strategies in the run-up to negotiations by exacerbating socio-economic and political tensions in black communities... When violence erupted the government invariably became part of the problem instead of the solution. At best, police behaviour during the late-apartheid period was negligent. At worst, the police used their positions of authority to promote rifts between associations and to destabilise black communities.<sup>43</sup>

Shortly after deregulation taxi associations were formed. Lack of regulation by government naturally led taxi operators to organize amongst themselves. Local taxi associations dealt with pricing and loading practices.<sup>44</sup> According to Sekhonyane and Dugard, taxi associations are the driving force behind the violence that has plagued the industry since the 1980s. The authors support their claim by arguing that 'unlike other forms of political violence that diminished or disappeared after 1994, taxi violence actually escalated in the immediate post-1994 period.'<sup>45</sup> Unfortunately, taxi violence is widespread throughout the country. One interview respondent describes a personal experience with taxi violence in Johannesburg.

R6 (taxi user, age 28, female): ...recently there was so many gunshots [at the rank] because there are so many taxis are not registered in the organizations. This makes it difficult for us as passengers who are taking taxis everyday. We don't know if we are going to get to work and back home safe.

Today it is widely known that the taxi industry is essentially run by cartels with mafia style rules. Innocent people are caught and killed in their territorial wars. In 2007, a number of taxi associations took offence to the University of Cape Town's (UCT) shuttle service, the Jammie Shuttle. The shuttle offers free transport services to the university's campuses for its students and staff. Even though it is a private service with thirteen

different routes some taxi associations clearly felt threatened by the service it provides. The associations had a particular gripe with the “Claremont shuttle” that runs on Main Road between Rondebosch and Claremont. They believed that this shuttle was not abiding by the operating rules of its permit. Taxi drivers protested and intimidated shuttle bus drivers. Taxi associations publicly announced violent threats to the service through the media. The university reported that a taxi driver even threatened a shuttle driver by flashing a firearm.<sup>46</sup> While UCT claimed it was not violating the rules of the permit, the university still decided to temporarily stop service on that route. The Jammie Shuttle is a minuscule enterprise compared to the magnitude of transport projects such as Gautrain and Rea Vaya. It will be interesting to see how the taxi industry will react to these new services in light of their territorial and violent history. Before these projects were introduced there have not been any new forms of public transport that effectively compete with the taxi industry.

Taxis are a multi-billion rand industry that carries over 60% of South Africa's commuters.<sup>47</sup> Since democracy there have been efforts by government to work with and regulate the taxi industry and its anarchistic ways. The latest effort is the government's taxi recapitalization program. The program aims to remove the most un-roadworthy vehicles from the road.<sup>48</sup> Although some question its purpose and effects it is the hallmark taxi policy of government. Furthermore, there is no singular organizing body for the taxi industry, which poses practical difficulties for government negotiations.

Despite the taxi industry's humble beginnings and its unpredictable future, it has remarkably managed to play a leading role in the nation's economy and transport service. In a sprawling city, life's essentials such as employment, banks, food and family are widespread, and their only links are roads and highways. The creation of the taxi industry was a response to the dramatic change in landscape that necessitated the automobile. The taxi industry is an 'informal' system created by the marginalized for the marginalized. It was an effort to resuscitate those without cars from the formal car-oriented city.

Altogether, this chapter outlines the history, ideologies and major events linked with the initial mass importation of the automobile into Johannesburg. This mass importation

came during Johannesburg's period of industrialization, and dramatically reorganized space within the city's landscape. This is when the city began losing its center. The trams and trains of pre-industrialization ran on a system that catered to a centralized city, but became obsolete when the city lost its center. The new mechanism to navigate this sprawling landscape was the automobile and its system of roads and highways. Finally, in an effort to adapt to the city's reorganization of space in favor of roads and highways, the taxi industry was created. Through personal perspectives and attitudes of regular taxi and car users the following section adds another layer to both industries.

### **Chapter 3: Attitudes and perception of private car and mini-bus taxi**

An urban transportation study of Porto, Portugal qualitatively compared attitudes towards public transportation and private car. The overarching goal of the authors was to determine what shapes transport behavior and choices. The authors argue that if we can identify what shapes these factors we can gear transport policies to address them. Ultimately, like many of transport studies about the private car, the goal is of a reduction of car usage. Beirao and Cabral admit that while it is unrealistic to think that public transportation will provide a service great enough for the majority of car-users to give up their cars, the goal is of reducing car usage by offering diverse modes of transportation. Furthermore, the authors believe that in order to achieve this goal 'policy should be directed towards market segments that are most motivated to change and willing to reduce frequency of car use.'<sup>49</sup>

'Attitude' as defined by social psychologists refers to a 'relatively enduring tendency to respond to someone or something in a way that reflects a positive or negative evaluation of that person or thing.' Furthermore, social psychologists theorize that attitude is expressed in three different forms: cognitive, affective and behavioral.<sup>50</sup> It is evident from this study and others (Beirao and Cabral 2007; Jensen 1999; Anable 2005) that non-instrumental factors like attitude shape transport choice and behavior. Attitudes reveal that transport choice is influenced by several factors such as the individual's characteristics and lifestyle, the type for journey, the perceived service performance of each transport mode and situational variables.<sup>51</sup>

Questions about peoples' regular mode of transport as well as how they perceived other modes of transport were included in the interviews. It is important to ask non-users about their attitudes towards taxi and private car so that one can understand their reasons for non-use; how they would feel if they had to use a taxi or private car; what would make car users switch to other modes; how they characterize taxi users and car users. This design allows one to easily compare and contrast modes and the perceived advantages and disadvantages of each mode. *Table 1* includes the most frequently responded advantages and disadvantages of the taxi and car.

**Table 1. Perceived advantages and disadvantages of taxi and private car of all respondents**

<b>Taxis</b>	
<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
Anticipated comfort (due to taxi recapitalization program)	Arrogant/Bad drivers
	Chauvinist drivers
	Lack of personal security
	Long waiting times
	Out of control of journey
	Overcrowded/uncomfortable
	Undemocratic – no say
	Stress
	Unsafe for kids
	Unsafe journey

<b>Private car</b>	
<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
Own timetable	Petrol/maintenance costs
Status	Traffic
Feel in control of journey	Isolating
Flexibility	
Private space	
Freedom/Independence	
Fast	
Ability to travel at night	

### 1.1.FEW POSITIVE ATTITUDES TOWARDS TAXIS

Only two respondents had positive attitudes towards taxis. Both mentioned the effects of the taxi recapitalization program as leading to the advantage of comfort on a taxi.

I: Do you find taxis comfortable? What makes it comfortable or uncomfortable?

R1 (taxi user, age 23, female): Not really although now the government is putting new taxis which they are bigger and they are more comfortable. They only take a while to get full.

R9 (taxi user, age 20, female): At first it was very uncomfortable, but ever since the government started implementing the taxi recapitalization program, things are drastically improving. They would force us to four in a place that is meant for three people because all they cared about was making money, and fast.

Both respondents discuss the program as a work in progress; the issue of comfort has not been completely solved. While R1 sees larger taxis as having the potential to be comfortable, she also considers the fact that this may lead to longer waiting times. These were the only responses that showed positive attitudes towards taxis. Most of the taxi users use taxis because they have no other option, and if they could afford a car they would use it as their primary means of transport. R1's responses are strikingly similar to the population group Jensen identifies in his study of Denmark. He describes these transport users as "public transport users of necessity."

first and foremost people who cannot afford a car. It can also be people who, for some reason, are incapable of driving, i.e. handicapped people or the elderly who no longer have a driver's license...When and if they can afford it, then those who can will purchase a car.<sup>52</sup>

Most of the taxis users note money as an obstacle to owning a car, and have a positive attitude towards cars.

R2 (taxi user, age 26, male): It [the car] symbolizes simplicity to handle life...I think it will be a big change in my life because it is something that everyone is willing to have.

R6 (taxi user, age 28, female): ...Yes I find a car influential to my daily routine...but at the moment I cannot afford any car...I don't have a luxury life or money to afford the car.

R10 (taxi user, age 24, female): People who use taxis are those who either can't afford a car, or those that haven't felt to buy a car yet.

There are two taxi users that indicate they do not necessarily desire to use a car as their primary means of transport. Although one respondent owns a car, he still chooses to use a taxi for some journeys, including work. The other respondent is a taxi user, and says he does not aspire to have a car.

R5 (taxi user, age 30, male): I don't know if a car is the solution in this situation because I don't have to think of the car in order for me to get to where I want to be.

Despite their transport choices, both respondents still did not perceive taxis as having any advantages.

## 1.2. TAXI DRIVERS

There were numerous negative attitudes towards taxi drivers by both taxi users and car users. Taxi drivers were described as arrogant, rude, vulgar, chauvinists, bad drivers (poor driving skills) and reckless.

R1 (taxi user, age 23, female): Taxi drivers are arrogant and they drive very bad, Sometimes they do not have public license to drive people...

R2 (taxi user, age 26, male): Once I was on my way to school in the morning and then they have to swap passengers, and in the same taxi no one explained to me if I have to change taxi. The taxi driver-instead of explaining to me that you have to take the other taxi was yelling at me like a child. I tried to answer him and he threatened me. He said 'I will take you the taxi rank and we will solve you.'

R4 (car user, age 24, male): ...Sometimes when I drive near a taxi driver I find myself thinking of the incidences that occur all the time with taxis. That does not make me feel like driving near it, and they don't mind to overtake on the left or even drive on the pavement and the yellow line.

Users of both modes of transport have felt threatened and humiliated by taxi drivers, and feel that road safety is often neglected. Taxi users feel as if they have no say about the service. There simply is no such thing as customer service in the taxi industry. If someone is truly infuriated by a situation he or she would not think of going to the taxi association to follow up.

### 1.3. LACK OF CONTROL – TAXIS

Taxi users not only feel out of control when it comes to road safety and the time it will take to get to their destination, but some actually feel like they are oppressed by taxi rules and timetables.

R2 (taxi user, age 26, male): I find people in taxis running like chickens without heads on the street to catch taxis while they have to wake up and take a bath or even make long preparations in order to get into a taxi smelling nice and all of that. I find it so unfair. Because they don't have a piece of mind to think of their day or even prepare for work or school while someone with a car- he can spend his time alone until he gets to work or to school without any difficulties or someone disturbing them.

I: Do you feel in control of your journey?

R1 (taxi user, age 23, female): No I don't think I have enough time to prepare myself for the taxi without being rushed, and go to the rank when all the taxis are waiting and we will wait for the taxi to be full. We always don't know when it is going to be full.

Taxi users perceive the taxi industry as completely undemocratic. They feel as if they have no say about instrumental factors such as routes, speed, quality, or cost. Likewise, they have no say regarding valued non-instrumental factors such as "peace of mind" or

the personality of the taxi driver. A few female respondents discussed their distaste for some taxi drivers because of their chauvinistic attitudes.

I: When a female and a male are sitting at the front of the taxi, why do you think the taxi driver often tells the female passenger to sit between himself and the male passenger?

R14 (taxi user, age 57, female): They say it's for protection, but I think it's more of a tradition. Besides, I can protect myself! If taxi drivers are so concerned for women they can start following traffic rules.

Similarly, most of the respondents whom listed bumper stickers they have seen used to decorate taxis cited ones with misogynistic tones, which provides a symbolic token of an unfortunate aspect of the industry. "If women were good, God would have one." "In the olden days girls used to cook like their mothers but now they drink like their fathers."

#### 1.4. OWN TIMETABLE – CARS

Both car users and taxi users perceive the car as allowing the individual to set his or her own timetable as a major advantage.

The wish to be independent of time and space is an important element in the modern lifestyle, and can be achieved, for instance, with the car where independence exists in its 'pure' form. In the car one exists in an independent space as one travels between two events. When one in today's society feels 'hung up' on a million things in daily life, the sensation of being independent of time and space can seem essential.<sup>53</sup>

R15 (car user, age 32, female): Yes I feel in control of my journey, because I can go wherever I want to go at anytime. And I can have peace and quiet after a long day, unlike in the taxis.

R16 (car user, age 34, male): Life would be very difficult without a car. I have four children and I work. It would be impossible to function without it. I wouldn't have the freedom to do all the things I do in the day like the shopping, pick them up from school, doctors appointments, malls, dance lessons. There would be less time in the day if I didn't have a car.

Clearly, there is the same amount of time in the day whether one uses a taxi or a car. However R16 perceives time differently for car users and non-car users. Both taxi users and car users perceive the car as independent of time, making car users freer to do the things they desire. Using public transportation makes a person dependent on someone else's time, and therefore one's freedom is limited. Ironically as people perceive the car as a provider of independence this creates a dependency on the car. 'You arrange your life independent of time and space, you structure your daily activities without



considering how far apart they are, and thereby you create a new dependency on the car.<sup>54</sup>

Making one's own time table is perceived as an advantage of using a car. This is perceived by all respondents as a way of giving one more flexibility and freedom.

However, Jensen argues that

the more people 'freely' choose to drive a car, the more cars there will be on the roads and the more congested and less navigable the roads become. Rush hour problems and traffic jams will be the consequence, and then the freedom has become a limitation.<sup>55</sup>

R4 (car user, age 24, male): I am in control most of the time. But in rush hour I don't even like to think about how late I'll be. In most cases I find it hard to just use a highway like the N1 in the morning and at 5 in the evening.

## 1.5. STATUS

All of the respondents recognized that the car symbolizes some kind of status in society for the person that drives that car. While quite a few respondents think that having a car is not completely definitive of one's character, having a car and not having car does definitively define class.

R8 (car user, age 17, female): The car symbolizes status with the community – the better car you have the more money you are likely to have.

R17 (car user, age 18, male): Yeah cars are symbol of status in life. Rich people drive nice cars. Poor people drive second hand cars. Because the world is materialistic...I would like to own a Mercedes Benz. The car is expensive and it would represent my success as in individual in life.

## 1.6. RESULTS

"Peace of mind," "the simplicity to handle life," freedom, and status were some of the non-instrumental factors that shape transport choices of the respondents. When taxi users were asked how they would feel if they switched transportation modes from taxi to private car they believed they would have more freedom and independence; they would have more opportunities; they would be more punctual. They characterize taxi users as struggling emotionally and as ashamed of themselves. Car users were described as

having peace of mind and isolated. Taxi users seem frustrated with taxis, but do not feel they have the power to change the current state of the transportation system. Car users seem content with their cars, and do not express interest in either using taxis or Gautrain and Rea Vaya. The following section delves into the perceptions respondents shared about non-instrumental factors such as the lifestyle, social mobility and freedom that are associated with cars.

In conclusion, both taxi users and car users share similar attitudes and perceptions towards the car. As R2 (taxi user, age 26, male) responded, "...it[a car] is something everyone is willing to have." These responses support the car as a desiring machine. The car is not only desirable in and of itself to both taxi users and car users, but it is culturally associated with other desirables such as luxury, flexibility, upward mobility, money and status. With just two exceptions, it is explicitly stated by taxi users that they prefer cars, but do not have the money to purchase one. Culturally, it is as if, owning a car is a rite of passage for taxi users. Once a person achieves success and upward mobility, a person graduates from a taxi to a car. The following section explores how these attitudes towards the car are propagated through the advertising media.

## Chapter 4: Car advertisement review

"The car is dead. Now let us slay the automonster."<sup>56</sup>

"The car is dead" refers to the pre-populist "car." Today cars are so imbued with politics, economic dispute, environmental degradation, war over oil, etc. that it has become its own multi-headed beast that seems to do things autonomously from us, hence the "automonster." A fundamental principle of any stage of capitalism is that it is perpetually searching for new markets. As the US and European car markets became oversaturated, carmakers needed new consumers, and they set out to create them in places like Johannesburg. The car alone did not bring capitalism to the Third World, but the economics of Fordism had an explicit relationship with the automobile during Johannesburg's industrialization. Capital needs demand, and the car is a perfect desiring machine. The car is fundamentally the mode in which new markets were penetrated at its initial mass importation. It led to consumers of landscapes by necessitating more highways; it led to a whole finance system that includes global financial institutions like the World Bank and IMF for credit and payment schemes. Think of all the commodities people could buy if everyone could drive to shopping malls and big-box retailers, and keep all their new things in their big *McMansions* in the suburbs. The car is the only mode of transport that enables this type of consumption. Because of the car, it is possible to live in a house that would have been impossible to have in the city. And so with a comfortable house in the suburbs one needs to buy a sofa, washer, dryer, dining room set, swing set- all of the things one could not buy if living in an apartment in the city without a car.

The car was accompanied by a highly sophisticated consumer culture that emphasized individuality and difference. The car is a desiring machine that creates more desiring machines. In other words, the consumption of the car leads to the production of more consumption. Identity production is completely wrapped up in the desire production the car brings- one of the greatest paradoxes of late capitalism is that we learn to appropriate other things to be ourselves. There becomes a kind of confusion between who is who that gets funneled through the car. This chapter explores the larger desiring apparatus in which the car is embedded. Lastly, the discussion of desire production

merits further exploration into the spatialization of the hyper-consumerism described by the car in the next chapter.

Six car manufacturers produce South Africa's top ten-selling passenger cars: Toyota Volkswagen, BMW, Opel, Mercedes and Mazda.<sup>57</sup> Due to the manufacturers' popularity, television commercials created by four of these manufacturers were analyzed using semiotic analysis. Likewise, the models chosen are amongst the top ten sold cars in the country for 2008. The television commercials contain a number of elements including narrative structure, dialogue, actors, music, film editing, different types of shots, etc.

Advertising is about appearances. It is also about information...what excites us in and about advertising is how objects, or products, become ideas, how they become gifted with appearances: how they make appearances and help *us* make appearances.<sup>58</sup>

Non-instrumental characteristics were looked for within the advertisements, including the non-instrumental characteristics that were mentioned by the respondents of this dissertation. It also looks at how cars, as material possessions, represent a specific system of values that can be ascribed to through consumption. Success, status and luxury were elements shared between the interview responses and the television commercials. Competition, revenge and speed were additional elements discovered within the television advertisements reviewed.

## Toyota

There is a packaged reality within the coded symbols of the Toyota Yaris advertisement that represents success and upward mobility. A young man drives his black Toyota Yaris around Johannesburg, distributing a Polaroid photograph to different people. At first, the viewer cannot see the photograph, but only the sequence just described. As the commercial comes to an end, the driver crosses off people from a list entitled "Victory Dance List." The list identifies the people the viewer has seen throughout the commercial. It includes the driver's school bully, ex-girlfriend, old boss and principal. It is also revealed that the photograph that was distributed is a picture of the driver's Toyota Yaris. Finally the text, "The new Toyota Yaris. Move on Move up." appears on the screen.



The major signifier in this commercial is the Toyota Yaris; and the signified is social status. Likewise, the driver signifies an upwardly mobile middle-class lifestyle. These signs make sense within a capitalist system, a system that values property and materialism, where material possessions endow social status and competition is encouraged. The responses of most taxi users clearly have a shared belief in this system as evidenced by their responses.

I: What do you think people would think if you had this car?

R7 (28, male): People will think I have achieved something in life.

I: How would you feel if you had a car?

R13 (21, female): Happy. I'd feel safer and successful.

Likewise, most of the respondents uninhibitedly stated, "cars symbolize status in life." The "Victory Dance List" itself, and the people on the list reinforce this system. A school bully is someone that degrades a person, crushes a person's social status, and physically attacks someone during childhood. An ex-girlfriend symbolizes a person that was loved and cared for in the past, but she is now depicted as a symbol of regret and revenge. The principal is a disciplinary and institutional figure. His presence on the list, as well as the serious and unimpressed expression on his face perhaps indicates that the principal did not have high expectations for his former learner. The symbol of an old boss that works in a supermarket signifies low-status, where the driver has come from. The act of distributing the photographs to these individuals signifies competition and revenge achieved through material wealth. It also signifies that it is desirable or important to show off to authority figures and social figures that effect one's status.

The sequencing of the commercial creates mystery and suspense. It would surely change the tone of the commercial if the viewer had seen the "Victory Dance List" before the driver began distributing the photographs. Different categories of social differentiation are created in the advertisement by creating an 'other.' There is a positive association between upward mobility and materialism, and in this case the material wealth is the Toyota Yaris. In that creation, the antithesis is implied as undesirable. One does not want to see unsavory people of the past without the Toyota Yaris. One does not want to see such people and have poor social status or remained stagnant. Interestingly, none of the encounters with the people on the driver's list are ever found in a car. The settings for those interactions varied: home, shop, basketball court and urban street. The last person he encounters, his ex-girlfriend, is the character walking down the urban street. At the end of the commercial the driver speeds past his shocked ex-girlfriend causing her dress to fly. This scene draws the juxtaposition between the two modes of transport in this shot: walking and car. Walking is clearly depicted as inferior. His embarrassed ex-girlfriend is left alone on an urban street *exposed* by the flight of her dress and lack of upward mobility, as metaphorically symbolized by her lack of car. The linguistic code that appears on the screen in the final shot, "Move on. Move up" clearly cements the ideology behind the system of meaning within this advertisement. The advertisement alludes to a metafiction, codified in consumer culture where the driver and car merely becomes a neatly packaged reality.

## Opel

We love them so much we build them their own bedrooms. We spoil them with perfume...we talk to them...cheat on them...swear at them...christen them...put their pictures on the wall...they came with us on holiday...we put our lives in their hands... and *life without them we'll never know* [emphasis added].<sup>59</sup>

An advertisement for Opel entitled, "Corporate, Ode to a Car" anthropomorphizes the car in a long monologue that corresponds to frequent change in scenes in which the car is always the main "character." As the last phrase, "life without them we'll never know," is said, the words "car" and "life" merge into "Opel- fresh thinking. Better cars." With one exception, both taxi users and car users share the attitude that "cars makes life easier."



their own bedrooms." The second shot is of another house with two car parks, focusing

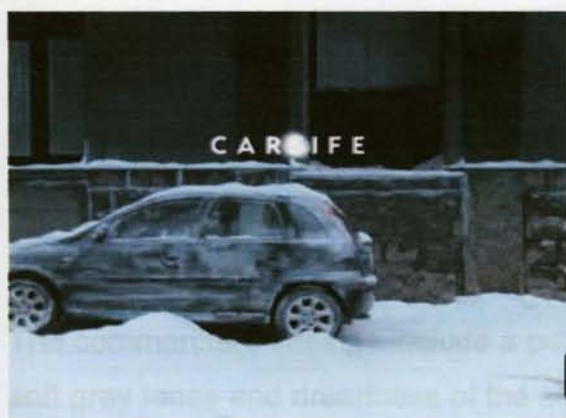
I: Do you consider cars prestigious? Does it symbolize anything? If so, what?

R2 (26, male, taxi user): Yes, it does. It symbolizes the simplicity to handle life.

I: What couldn't you do without a car?

R16 (34, male, car user): Life would be very difficult without a car. It's sad, but true. I have four children and I work. It would be impossible to function without it. I wouldn't have the freedom to do all the things I do in the day like the shopping, pick them up from school, doctors appointments, malls, dance lessons. There would be less time in the day if I didn't have a car.

All of the car users perceive cars an integral part of daily life. When asked to consider public transportation, they would only consider it if they had no other choice. Car users perceive cars as endowing freedom, control, safety and comfort- characteristics they are unwilling to give up.



The primary rhetorical tropes used in this advertisement are metaphors. As a signifier Opel cars signify an integral part of life. Its vital role is portrayed in many ways. The over-arching metaphor is the car as a family member. The commercial explains the metaphor with more metaphors of the car as a loved one, listener, lover, as a religious follower, as something adorned etc. In this commercial, the car is a human member of our family.

The commercial begins with a shot of two girls joyfully playing hopscotch outside of a house with a car park. The monologue begins, "We love them so much we build them

their own bedrooms.” The second shot is of another house with two car parks, focusing the viewers’ attention to the car park as a metaphor for a bedroom. “We spoil them [Opel cars] with perfume” is matched with the image of car air-freshener hanging off the rear-view mirror. “We put their [Opel cars] pictures on the wall.” Like a photograph of a loved one or a family portrait, a photograph of the car is cherished in the bedroom.

The system in which these signs make sense is in a car-oriented society, to say the least. The commercial goes a step further by creating a language and system in which the car is a family member, an offspring, grandmother, pet etc. In this coded language, the car plays an integral role in family life. All of the shots paint a domestic picture, and always include the car. The shots often include a house or a room in a house. The symbol of the home signifies domesticity and family values. The car makes its ‘journey’ with you and your family through life. It is an infant and becomes the elderly. It goes through the trials and tribulations of life: baptism, loved, cheated on, talked to, praised, dies etc. Many of the scenes are completely focused on the car, but for those that include other elements the settings are either urban or suburban. The commercial’s overall objective paints an emotional biography of the car. The car and its owners share feelings for each other; the car is as integral to life as a wife, husband and god.

## **BMW**

The BMW commercial’s coded symbols emphasize uniqueness, class and innovation. The commercial’s settings include a beach house and the seashore on a rainy day. The soft grey tones and dreariness of the settings give the commercial a dream-like quality. Throughout the commercial, a self-described engineer/kinetic sculptor discusses what it takes to do his kind of work. The camera cuts back and forth between he and his sculpture on the seashore, creating a sense that the viewer is inside the imaginary mind of the engineer/kinetic sculptor.





As a symbol, the man in the commercial is two things, an engineer and an artist. In shot 7 the man narrates as he drafts sketches of the sculpture inside the beach house. He says, "Part of me, as an engineer, is to map the progress of mobility." Later in shot 11, he explains, "Another part of me as an artist was to sculpt the air that surrounds us and give it shape." As he narrates, the man is on the shore molding the sculpture. The man, as an engineer signifies intelligence and expertise. The man as a kinetic sculptor signifies fine art and class. The acts of drafting and sculpting bring the viewer inside that man's technical and artistic mind, contributing to the commercial's imaginary and dreamy quality. Alperstien discusses the similarities between advertising and dreams. He says,

Wish fulfillment, one of the basic tenets of dreams, is also the basis for much advertising. Images in advertising are sometimes 'dreamy.' And sequences and pacing in advertising is also in some cases dreamlike. Furthermore, like their counterparts in the entertainment industry, creative directors, copywriters, and art directors may be considered some of the best dreamers in culture.<sup>60</sup>

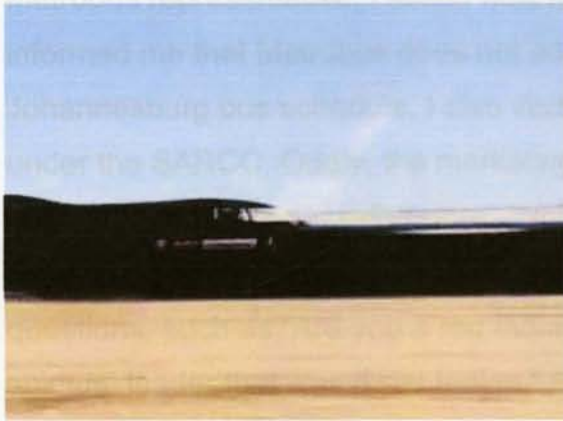
The grey tones, cloudiness and camera shots signify fantasy. The symbolic language of this commercial values wealth, fine art and exclusivity, even the beachfront property setting embodies these ideals. The object of this fantasy is a BMW, which never actually appears in the commercial. The steadfast BMW brand is a metonymy that grounds the commercial in class and luxury, rendering the physical appearance of the car unnecessary. In fact, the BMW logo only appears at the end of the commercial.

### **Volkswagen**

In the Volkswagen commercial "Polo\_Landspeed" a black PQ-24 jet is gliding across an open desert at an extraordinary speed. From shot 1 to shot 7 the viewer hears the loud noise of the jet. In shot 4 the viewer can hear radio dialogue. In shot 7 the jet picks up



speed, and moves out of the camera's view, leaving dust behind it. At the end of the commercial, the jet disappears and a man gets out of a black car, implying that the jet is a metaphor for the car.



Like the BMW commercial, the creators of this commercial indulge in fantasy. The car represents speed and freedom. It is desirable to go fast because it is liberating. Jensen argues that freedom

...is tied to both the car and actually driving, and thereby it acquires a new and modern form. Freedom and cars are not synonymous concepts, but they have rather joined up in a symbiotic relationship where they together symbolize modernity.<sup>61</sup>

Freedom is considered vital to industrialized countries. In many television commercials, the car is perceived as giving one more choice, individuality and freedom, which all epitomize the values of the industrialized world. In addition, individuality is the essence of consumer culture's identity production. Both taxi users and car users included in this dissertation described car users as "having piece of mind" and "independent."

The tone of the commercial has an element of playfulness. Towards the end of the commercial the text, "You'll think you can" appears. The driver looks confused, and is scratching his head. An upbeat guitar begins playing. The commercial invokes the imagination. The driver of the car is like a boy playing with a toy. It is a common simile for men in car advertisements to be depicted as boys. Yet in these similes the men manage to maintain all of their adulthood masculinity. The commercial encourages men to escape into childhood, where fun rules and responsibilities do not exist. He does not have to think about the real life consequences of speeding in a country where most road accidents are caused by speeding and drunk driving.<sup>62</sup>

## **Advertising for public transportation**

I could not find any advertising for taxis, rail or buses. During an interview with a Metrobus representative, I asked how much was spent on advertising annually. She informed me that Metrobus does not advertise. Instead she printed a copy of every Johannesburg bus schedule. I also visited Metrorail shortly after it had been housed under the SARCC. Oddly, the marketing associate could not provide any examples of rail advertisements nor references. While she did her best to answer some of my other questions about the industry, she felt very comfortable asking me a number of personal questions, such as "Are you a red Indian?" She explained, "Because I used to go to a spiritual leader that was a red Indian." Rather than answering my questions, another SARCC employee, an engineer, insisted on asking me personal questions regarding my marital status. So despite my efforts to obtain information about public transportation advertising I left these offices mostly empty-handed. Therefore, it seems consumers are exposed to little, if any media, to counteract the symbolic and powerful messages of car advertisements.

## **Results**

In summary, all of the car advertisements depict the automobile as a desiring machine that makes you desire such things as suburban life, a beach house, revenge, speed, freedom and individuality. The advertisements also portray a number of reorganizations of space that were partially created due to the mass importation of the automobile. The purchase of a new car makes people desire to prove themselves as successful to those within their social networks as shown in the Toyota commercial. The Opel commercial takes a similar idea a step further by portraying the car not only an asset to one's social network, but as an integral and participating member. All of the car manufacturer's television commercials market each model as possessing characteristics that have everything to do with non-instrumental factors like culture and social networks rather than the actual technology of the car. The fact that non-instrumental elements dominate every commercial reviewed indicates that car manufacturers value these elements so greatly that they are never excluded.

Semioticians tell us that everything we do is read as a "message" and that we are always sending messages to other people—just as they are

always sending messages to us. These messages are sent by our lifestyle decisions—our clothes, hairstyles, cars and homes and other material goods, as well as our bodies, facial expressions, and body language.<sup>63</sup>

Furthermore, the commercials offer some examples of how people experience the spatial reorganizations the car helped create. The Toyota and Opel commercials even offer specific examples within Johannesburg. Looking through the car's windowpane at Johannesburg, one observes spatial reorganizations such as shopping malls, driveways, garages, car washes and large car parks.

It can be argued that cars play a more vital role in status delineation in South Africa as compared with other countries. Perhaps South African society cherishes the car for its ability to easily signify status because this allows for some level of human categorization other than the racial categories harshly imposed under apartheid. On that same note, perhaps some people associate cars with the ability to continue differentiating themselves as better than the masses. However, this is its own research topic, and will not be thoroughly explored in this study. As a final note, when respondents were asked to choose a car from a list and explain the reason for their choice, their reasoning did not match up with the distinguished features of the model they chose. However, outside of luxury brands, cars are generally advertised with the same recurrent themes: success, freedom, speed, precision, sexuality, etc. Luxury brand car commercials also include these themes, but typically include an added dimension of taste and opulence.

## Chapter 5: *Carscape*

The car as a cultural phenomenon has a very important significance to many people. Both as a focal point for a community and as a symbol of a number of more or less attractive 'things' in modern society. These 'things' are of course attractive, because they are not merely symbols of power, status, independence etc., but also because they actually show and mean that people who own and drive a big and expensive car like jaguar, Mercedes, BMW, Ferrari and others, often are the people with power and influence. So it is not just an idea that one attaches these 'things' to cars—often there are realities supporting it.<sup>64</sup>

The 'desired lifestyle' television commercials and authors like Vasconcellos have alluded to consists of a network of private schools, gated communities, office parks and shopping malls that cater to the middle and upper classes. These nodes are a part of a reality characterized by an open-closure, luxury, freedom and security. The only mechanism that enables access to these private islands is the coveted automobile. The culture and lifestyle housed within these nodes is what many taxi users and car users alike imagine life to be with a car. When given a list of car models to choose from R8 had this to say about her choice, the Volkswagen Golf.

R8 (car user, age 17, female): [It's a] typical car driven by a young 'city slick individual' that probably lives in a 'townhouse'. Boosts profile, when you arrive at venue in Golf you always get noticed.

From this car model the respondent is able to imagine where the driver of a Golf lives, his or her personality and status. Similarly, R1 explained why she chose an Opel Corsa from the list.

R1 (taxi user, age 23, female): Opel Corsa. Because I can open my business with it. People would think of me as a driver and maybe helpful to them.

This respondent sees the car as having the capability to open up opportunities. She equates drivers as status symbols; the same way an esteemed professional like a doctor or lawyer acquires status. These non-instrumental responses: status, opportunity and wealth correspond to a much larger imaginary of place, space, identity, lifestyle and network.

The car is able to have a relationship with so many different things from the tangible to the philosophical because one does not simply start importing cars to a place. An “automonster” is introduced with highways, gas stations and spin-off industries. Cars require an absurd amount of very visible infrastructure that changes the face of the city. Kevin Kuswa reminds us of the case in the United States, in which the highway machine was an overt mechanism in the organization of land and people, capital and labor. Therefore the decentralization of the city was *enabled* (rather than confined) by the highway by increasing the freedom of movement and settlement.<sup>65</sup> The highways, in short, as is described by Reyner Banham in *Los Angeles: the Architecture of Four Ecologies*, allowed for dispersed settlement patterns and industry decentralization.

In Johannesburg that contributed to the death of the CBD, and the rise in suburban office parks, shopping centers and residential cul de sacs. The city no longer had to be geographically concentrated. This also means that one does not have to depend on the city center because employers are dispersed throughout its sprawling suburbs. The city not only lost its CBD, its center, it lost its inside. The city became characterized by a kind of sprawling matte density. The new landscape was one in which people live in dispersed private islands. This chapter analyzes two such expressions of decentralization: Absa Towers and Ponte City, which both exemplify the island-like enclave of decentralization.

### **The Absa towers**

The Absa offices are located on Main Street, in the west side of town. They are made up of three buildings that are connected to each other by skywalks. The buildings house an art gallery, ponds, bridges and palm trees. Lindsay Bremner explains that ‘staff can shop at a convenience or hardware store, visit the hairdresser, work out at the gym, take lunch in the staff canteen or a coffee shop all within the Absa precinct.’<sup>66</sup> And of course, the compound’s perimeter is under heavy surveillance by the police. One does not have to set foot on the city’s pavement to access any of these services or commodities. Its location is easily accessible by the highway, and public transportation can be accessed just outside the entrance. The buildings’ set up purposefully does not engage with the city or people around it. They bear no distinguishing features besides

the Absa sign. If the logos were removed, and one walked within the buildings there would be no inclination as to where the building is on the planet. It is a self-sufficient island that could be anywhere in the world.

During the years of capital flight, Absa chose to keep its downtown offices. Its strategy for surviving the inner city, Bremner argues, was to follow Sandton's model of closure, luxury and security. A woman employed by Absa that Bremner interviewed says she had left the Absa compound once in two years. She was nervous when she discovered she would be working in the CBD, but as time passed her fears were soothed by the fact that she never had to leave the compound.<sup>67</sup> The modernist architecture that was condemned for its emphasis on functionality is resurfacing in a new and bizarre way at the Absa buildings. The now demolished, Pruitt-Igoe housing project, in St. Louis, Missouri was said to epitomize modern architecture. The housing development was a self-contained environment that lacked engagement with the rest of the city, like the Absa buildings today. The difference is that Pruitt-Igoe was a public housing development built for low-income residents, and the Absa buildings were built as office space. The architecture of Pruitt-Igoe stressed functionality, meaning there was certainly no room for luxury. Because of their lack of income, the architecture's prison-like features were forcibly imposed upon its residents. They lacked the mobility and choice that workers at the Absa buildings have outside of these structures. Although the Absa building retains its basic modernist architecture of a bland face brick facade, inside the space has been dramatically reinvented, morphing the building into a hybrid space.

Contemporary architecture in South Africa post-apartheid is arguably much like work anywhere else in the world where, in postmodern ways, styles, trends and influences are juxtaposed and coexist in cities that are increasingly hybrid and disjointed from their modernist and colonial masterplans.<sup>68</sup>

There is a strange open-closure to postmodern settlement patterns. One is closed in a tower, and then one gets into his or her private vehicle that is also closed, and goes to another private, closed space like the shopping mall or office. While the physical space is marked by closure, security and privacy, it actually opens a whole new world for people who can afford it. Put explicitly, the car enables an open-closure in which the private realm is expanded to include the in-between spaces of mobility. It opens the

private. It is the privatization of the cityscape. The flexibility of car mobility allows one to go exactly where he or she wants, and build a city a la carte. The car gives options. It is freedom, free movement and entitlement. Lastly, it is precisely this expansion of the private sphere that allows one to minimize interaction with the public.

The Absa towers' self-contained environment possesses a new element of decadence and contributes to Johannesburg's curious postmodern landscape. Like the car advertisements and the perceptions of some respondents, the Absa towers value exclusivity, luxury and control. These are hallmarks of postmodern architecture that are provided by self-contained environments. These environments promise to keep socially undesirables like the homeless, unemployed and underemployed at a safe distance. Intriguingly, at the Absa towers one can ensure this exclusivity and security at work, the café, gym and or hairdresser without setting foot outside the building. As an employee at the Absa towers, social networking, consumerism, status and capital are conveniently intertwined within one space. These types of places are essential to the middle class, and the car is the only form of transportation that enables it.

### **From Sandton City to Ponte City**

If Sandton City was the inspiration behind the Absa towers, then Ponte City is a glimpse into its potential future. Ponte City is the distinguishable building also commonly known as the *Vodacom tower*. Located on a hill, the cylindrical tower consists of 54 apartments that rest upon a seven-tiered parking lot. An enormous electrified Vodacom logo envelops the top of the building. It was intended to be 'a self-sufficient city, where residents home from work in the evenings need not venture outside for anything. Residents could do all their shopping, laundry, even their banking. There were recreational activities too—a coffee shop, a bowling alley.'<sup>69</sup> Like the Absa towers, residents would rarely be required to leave the confines of something structured and secure. Under apartheid, racial segregation mandated white cities, and racial discrimination privileged white access to resources and opportunities such as housing. When Ponte City opened in 1976, it housed whites, but due to residential shifts northward, residents of the building gradually left for the northern suburbs. Today laundry draped over the edges of countless windows covers a considerable portion of



the building's surface. According to Lizeka Mda, 'the supermarket is the only store still open. What was once the recreation hall is now the Missionary Centre Church, started by French-speaking immigrants mainly from the DRC.'<sup>70</sup>

There is a very interesting twist in Ponte City's history. In 1996 the building's owners entertained the idea of turning Ponte City into a prison. The Department of Correctional Services was surveying the city for a space to accommodate a rapidly growing number of inmates in Johannesburg. The drafts included space for 5,000 inmates, a police station, a courthouse, parking and a shuttle service. A seasoned correctional facility architect, Paul Silver, observed that the flats are 'just awful... but, they would make a good prison.'<sup>71</sup> The plans were unofficially approved by the minister of correctional service, but were put on the backburner after it was discovered that the plans did not go through all the proper paperwork.

Ponte City's original function and the Absa towers of today are self-contained environments with 24-hour surveillance, where people are provided with all of their daily needs. The private car is absolutely imperative to these kinds of self-contained environments, which cater to the middle and upper classes. Cars are marketed as secure, allowing for more choice, and allow the freedom to move from one essential, middle-class, self-contained node to the next. One can move from mall to gated community to private school all within structures that provide ontological security. The fact that architects have considered the idea of turning Ponte City into a prison is a great irony within the Johannesburg landscape. It is amazing that places like Ponte City and the Absa towers can be structurally equivalent yet could potentially serve polar opposite population groups-the ultra wealthy and criminals. Today Ponte City can be considered a post-apocalyptic foreshadowing into a society that values excess, exclusivity, security and ill-defined freedom from warped structures with corroded symbolism.

Conclusively, the mass importation of the automobile contributed to the spatial reorganizations of Johannesburg because the car came with a very visible infrastructure that Christopher Pinney calls the "automonster." Together the car and the "automonster" allow for dispersed settlement patterns and industry decentralization.

This spatial reorganization contributed to the death of the CBD, and the rise in decentralized and private-island spaces like the ABSA towers and Ponte City. Furthermore, the automobile as a desiring machine, influenced reorganizations of culture because culturally significant nodes like the ABSA towers and Ponte City are only accessible by the open-closure mobility that the car enables. This open-closure allows for a fluidity of movement even in the in-between spaces from private schools to residential cul de sacs, office blocks and shopping malls. While the physical space of these culturally significant nodes is marked by an isolating closure it culturally opens up space for those with cars.

## Chapter 6: Culture of public transportation

As previously stated, taxis service 60 percent of the nation's population, making it the vehicle in which most people experience the city.<sup>72</sup> It is a part of a network that connects, disconnects and resurrects people, places and things in Johannesburg. Despite its current one-dimensional reputation as a site of urban decay, downtown Johannesburg houses many of these interesting nodes and networks including the major public transportation hubs, Faraday Station and the "Noord" Street taxi rank. Faraday Station includes different modes of public transport: a taxi rank, bus station and train station. On the other hand, "Noord" includes just the taxi industry. However, these spaces are much more than transport hubs; they are hybrid spaces loaded with a complex weaving of people, histories, social networks and commodities.

Despite the well-known effects of automobile generated landscapes, such as the production of consumer landscapes like big-box retail and shopping malls, an emergent *glocal* culture also surrounds the car.<sup>2</sup> The dismantling and dispersion of the economic and political center from the city has, in some regard, opened up new potentialities for the urban. This is symbolized by the CBD, once the financial stronghold of the city, which has been usurped by a new multiplicity of constituencies. The car continues to unintentionally support many informal micro-economic enterprises that have resisted, emerged and or adapted to a car-oriented society. There is no better example than the taxi industry, and the following two examples: the enterprises of the Rastafarians at "Noord" and the women of the *muti* market. As Laguerre explains, "informality is a point of resistance not so much against a certain class or group but against forms of power, which deny the individuality of the subject."<sup>73</sup> Furthermore, he explains, "postmodern thinking celebrates the return of the subject. The subject is here at the very heart of our distinction, in the sense that he or she decides or not to engage in informal practices. Urban informality is the expression of the freedom of the subject."<sup>74</sup> So despite the imposing structures, cultures and spatial organizations of a car-oriented society, public

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<sup>2</sup> Glocal refers to 'the individual, group, division, unit, organisation, and community which is willing and able to 'think globally and act locally.' <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glocal>

transportation users still manage to find freedom of mobility and identity through the creation of distinct cultures and spatial organizations within the nooks and crannies of the city.

### **“Noord”**

In downtown Johannesburg, regular social meetings do not necessarily occur in a meeting hall, club or restaurant; pharmacies are outdoors; snacks come to your window. Hawkers, street vendors, shoe shiners and barbers can be found scattered throughout every crevice of the city in ‘informal’ ways, using the street pavement or a shaded corner as their operation base. These are the countless unique sites and occurrences that more often than not go overlooked by private car users. When taking a taxi to Faraday Station- even if it is just transfer to another taxi-one simply cannot escape the hustle and bustle of these complex characters and interactions. It is a part of the experience of using public transportation. Unlike their suburban counterparts, these spaces, businesses and interactions are partly characterized as informal. They are activities initiated as a survivalist tactic due to a rejection from formal activities.

At the “Noord” taxi rank Rastafarians can be found appropriating a space for the ‘informal’ business of selling marijuana. The Rastafarians keep their stock in the back of a *combi*. The marijuana be found in its natural form, but the entrepreneurial Rastafarians have also diversified the product. The commodity can be bought in different forms, from an individual space cake to a space loaf. Suitably, a cultural and religious group that possesses an inherently transnational- and therefore mobile- identity can be found at the top of the rank. As Rastafarians, their networking nodes stretch far beyond the city. The origins of Rastafarianism are linked to Ethiopia and Jamaica, but today Rastafarian communities can be found virtually anywhere in the world.

The appropriated space is not only a place of business, but it is also a place for socializing and listening to music. Like their middle-class counterparts the Rastafarians and their patrons seek a place where they can do business, socialize, entertain and eat. The Rastafarians occupy an open-air space that has been appropriated from a structure

whose function is mobility. There are no cameras. There are no walls or gates, just tarmac, sky, a radio and a *combi*. Ironically, it is one of the few places in Johannesburg where a car would serve as a major deterrent since taxis are the only motor vehicles allowed in that space. Unlike the network nodes of the Rastafarians' middle-class counterparts, socializing, networking, business and entertainment do not occur in policed, luxurious self-contained spaces that are entirely reliant on the car to gain access. Still, the Rastafarians' enterprise can indirectly be attributed to the car and the "automonster." As an unexpected byproduct, the Rastafarians suggest a cultural depth and is also a specifically spatialized phenomenon. This is particularly interesting because cars are generally thought of as having completely decimated local market spaces and replaced them with global retail chains. The Rastafarians at "Noord" have created an unexpected market from the car's arrival.

### ***Muti* market**

The massive highways and car culture that shape Johannesburg creates some fascinating unplanned urban places. Postmodern theory, in part, characterizes spaces by the land use of an area. For example, an airport is used for the transportation of people and things from one point to another; a parking lot is a space to keep cars.<sup>75</sup> Furthermore, the theory makes the case that spaces turn into places when spaces are given different meaning, by different groups for different purposes, making place a social construct.<sup>76</sup> Faraday station in downtown Johannesburg is a space that functions as a multiplicity of places. The 'Faraday Precinct' is bounded within Anderson Street, Von Wielligh Street/Rosettenville Road, Eloff Street and Newton Street. It is a large busy public transportation hub that includes trains, buses and taxis, but also a place one goes to if in the market for herbal medicine. Laguerre describes informal urban practices like the *muti* market as a resilient hidden structure, yet fundamental to the make-up of society.<sup>77</sup> Furthermore, he states that 'the idea of resistance implies the recognition of the resiliency of cultural traditions that cannot easily be brushed aside by the formal system.'<sup>78</sup>

Run by mostly women from different communities in rural KwaZulu-Natal, Lizeka Mda explains the origins of the market.

Widowed in the ongoing conflict in their home province during the eighties, many poor uneducated women found themselves with no means of supporting their families...armed only with their knowledge of *muti*, the medicinal uses of herbs and roots, [they] came to Johannesburg.<sup>79</sup>

These herbal specialties can be found on the traffic island next to the M2 highway on Eloff Street. Mda creatively describes the market as an “open-air hyperpharmacy” that also doubles as a death trap because of its location. Nonetheless, the speeding cars that surround the traffic island clearly do not faze the women. Mda estimates that there are twenty herbalists in the market, and they all travel to Durban to get their stock. These women possess highly mobile identities that have emerged from their movement between three nodes. They were born in rural KwaZulu-Natal, brought their traditional cultural practices with them to Johannesburg, and regularly visit Durban for stock. From this established web, they are able to uphold connections to their place of birth and be apart of virtual communities through the maintenance of unique cultural practices. In so doing they continue to produce locality outside of the places where they initially acquired that local knowledge. According to Appadurai, local knowledge is substantially about producing reliably local subjects as well as about producing reliably local neighborhoods within which such subjects can be recognised and organised.<sup>80</sup>

The herbalists’ only form of advertising is word-of-mouth. These businesses are in many ways the antithesis of what can be found in the shops of the upmarket shopping malls in the northern suburbs. There is no security, luxury and certainly no closure. However, unlike many of the commodities found in the northern suburbs these products possess so much ‘singularity’ that herbalists have maintained their businesses while selling the same exact products side-by-side with twenty other herbalists.<sup>81</sup> One of the women in Mda’s article, MaMkize Ngcobo, is not bothered by the fact that all the women are selling the same exact products. She is confident in her knowledge of *muti*, and boasts that her customers trust and believe in her because of their long-established relationships. She says, “Even whites come here,” implying that her knowledge and herbs are so ‘singular’ that even the unexpected pay her a visit. The women have managed to maintain a contemporary identity through the production of locality rather than consumer culture.

The production of locality is a reminder that even the most apparently mechanical forms of social order that seem to function without design, contingency, or intentionality but simply by the force of routine—what we used to call habit—include large amounts of deliberate attention, effort, and labor. Part of that attention, effort, and labor is involved in a *collective ideas of what is possible*. Therefore, for the local to have some spatialized embodiment takes an effort which transcends that very spatiality. So the idea is not to, as it were, de-spatialize the local, or evacuate the spatial from the local, but to add something to it.<sup>82</sup>

The women of the market have remarkably turned a space under the highway into a place, and add dimension to Johannesburg's landscape through their production of locality. Mda even refers to the market as 'a corner of KwaZulu-Natal in Johannesburg.'<sup>83</sup> Like the Rastafarians of "Noord," the ladies have been able to survive through the production of a *glocal* culture. The practice of *muti* has a history that long precedes the mass importation of the car to Johannesburg. Yet the ladies have astonishingly managed to adapt and survive the massive restructuring of space and consumer culture the car has imposed upon the city. Perhaps unknowingly, the ladies of the *muti* market have followed the isolationist patterns of the city and its nodes of private-islands by establishing themselves on a cement traffic island.

In conclusion, urban decay is not the only phenomena happening in the city center. Although, the mass importation of the automobile brought about reorganizations of space that helped hollow out the CBD, unique informal constituencies that the car inadvertently supports have emerged in the CBD. The entire taxi industry emerged because a transportation system that ran on roads and highways, but did not necessitate a private car, was needed. As taxi ranks became a major influx of people, culture and informal businesses, unique social and spatial enterprises like the Rastafarians of "Noord" emerged in the CBD. Finally, the women of the Muti market have adapted their centuries-old cultural practice to the spatial reorganizations the car helped create in Johannesburg by setting up shop on a highway traffic island. These acts of resistance, emergence and adaptation have all been influenced by the spatial reorganizations the car helped create in Johannesburg. Furthermore, I argue that unlike the car, taxi culture is not subject to the desiring mechanism the car has. The taxi is associated with its own movement patterns within the city, social networks and values that help shape the taxi industry's unique culture. Resistance, informal practices,

creativity, adaptation, survivalist acts are a part of taxi culture and identity that often go unnoticed in favor of violence, mafia-style culture, aggression and sexism.



## Chapter 7: Conclusions

Unlike the treelike, hierarchical structures of traditional cities the contemporary metropolis functions more like a spreading rhizome, dispersed and diffuse, but at the same time infinitely enabling.<sup>84</sup>

In the final analysis of my findings to my first research question, *How did the mass importation of the automobile contribute to the spatial reorganizations of Johannesburg's landscape?*, I have stated that the mass importation of the car does not come alone. It comes with a tremendous amount of infrastructure like freeways, roads, gas stations and spin-off industries, which leads to spatial reorganizations of a city like Johannesburg. The automobile contributed to the decentralization of the city by connecting the city's sprawling private-island nodes of shopping malls, residential cul de sacs, office space and private schools. It has helped turn Johannesburg's landscape into the rhizome. Lastly, although the subject of this dissertation focuses on the automobile's role in reshaping space in Johannesburg, there were certainly other contributing factors. For example, legal racial segregation followed the same pattern of decentralization as the car. The difference is that the car's spatial planning was focused on creating a web of infrastructure that included the location of highways, bridges and roads, whereas legal racial segregation contributed to decentralization by mapping out residential plots of land based on race.

In summary of my second research question, *How did the automobile, as a desiring machine, influence reorganizations of culture in Johannesburg?*, The desiring machine has influenced reorganizations of culture by acting as the only form of transportation that enables the new type of consumer culture that industrialization brought upon society. As evidenced by the non-instrumental factors embedded within the car advertisements reviewed, the car enables upward mobility; it is a tool for revenge and an ally a competitive society. The car is depicted as an integral part of life, and symbolizes the capitalist values of freedom, individuality and class. Furthermore, the car shares these values with many of the spaces and material possessions included in the advertisements such as suburbia, a jet, a palm pilot and a luxury beach house. The strong correlations the desiring machine has with space and culture lead to the consumption of more goods. With respect to culture, even though public transport users

do not possess the capital to participate in the mass consumption the desiring machine produces, users still abide by the values associated with the car. They strive for the material aspirations of the desiring machine. As evidenced by participant responses in Chapter 5, taxi users aspire to own a car, and identify with the values associated with the car. Lastly, it should be mentioned that other factors influenced the reshaping of Johannesburg's culture, but the car is the only form of transportation that enabled this type of pervasive mass consumerism.

### **Mobility and culture amongst taxi users**

While we often think of taxi users as having limited mobility, in transit their social and cultural interactions have tremendous breadth and depth. Commodities, ideas, capital, people and much more are moving throughout the planet at increasing speeds, transcending national boundaries. Appadurai points out that today it is widely acknowledged that human motion is definitive of social life more often than it is exceptional.<sup>85</sup> As a major transportation center, the Johannesburg central business district (CBD) is the site of such mobility. It seems everyone in the CBD is always on his or her way to somewhere else. Taxi users

...transform the social and economic character of the city and connect its divided landscape. It is only in their fluid groupings and regroupings, in their reimagining and remaking of their lives on the streets and pavements of the modernist city, that apartheid spatiality has been redrafted. Here a different city has been imagined and new sites of resistance identified.<sup>86</sup>

Walking through the city, one can hear countless different languages other than the eleven official languages of South Africa, and view signs written with different alphabets. Traditional clothing from other parts of the world is also a visible part of the cityscape. Therefore despite the failures of the inner city that have made it into a locus of crime, poverty and decay there proves to be an extraordinary vibrancy, culture and mobility found within it.

The taxi industry and its consumers are openings onto somewhere—"textures that punctuate and steer." Simone argues that 'informal' businesses like the taxi industry are 'the products of specific spatial practices and complex interactions of variously located actors that reflect maneuvers on the part of city residents to continuously resituate

themselves in broader fields of action.<sup>87</sup> The *muti* market and Rastafarian business are not intended to glorify the taxi industry, or depict it as the source of a cultural revolution. The industry is rarely- if ever- discussed from a cultural, spatial or social perspective. The sparse stories that receive mass attention are typically negative. For example, the gender conflicts of the industry have received much more press than the *muti* market at Faraday Station. There is a cultural and social depth to the taxi industry. The taxi industry is a massive enterprise that involves millions. If we are left to believe that the social and cultural elements of the industry only consists of taxi wars, bad drivers and tensions between taxi drivers and car drivers, we ignore the many people that are doing remarkable things despite many of their less than desirable situations and the often perceived less than desirable service of the taxi industry.

### **Rethinking the way we see cars and public transport**

Jensen argues that the car and society are involved in a dialectical relationship: 'to analyze the car and motoring is therefore to analyze modern society and vice versa.'<sup>88</sup> Some of the common non-instrumental factors that were identified by respondents in this study include freedom, status, luxury and "piece of mind." Similarly success, status and luxury were non-instrumental factors shared between respondents and the car advertisements analyzed. The capitalist middle class networks of Johannesburg embody these values. According to Vasconcellos, places like the Absa towers are an integral part of middle class network nodes, and are perceived by the middle class as imperative to their survival.

Government polices, engineers and urban planners should continue to address instrumental factors such as the physical structure of public transportation and the regulation of private cars. However, the pressing issue of this dissertation is highlighting the relationships mobility has with space and culture for the two most popular forms of transport. Doing so forces us to rethink our attitudes towards private car and public transport. In so doing, hopefully a solution that values equitable mobility within the city be created. Appadurai argues that,

Architects and planners often do not recognize that the people whose concerns they are seeking to address have very complicated aspirational maps, in which spatial issues play a part. The issue is not to cut straight

through to get the quickest road from the designer's head or mandate or professional context to delivering the house, the road, the shopping mall, the train station, but to figure out where those elements actually might fit more fruitfully.<sup>88</sup>

Also, as Jensen argues what 'the different types [of transport users] and their various demands and ideas can be used for in the planning process as well as the actual changing of the transport system, is to recognize the diversity and differences in 'need' and perceptions.'<sup>90</sup> In terms of stated preference between the two modes of transport, people included in the interviews share very similar attitudes towards private car and taxi yet they range in background, incomes, living situation, lifestyles and cultures. Those differences need to be addressed in marketing materials. The media proves to be a largely influential source in shaping attitudes and perceptions towards the car. In fact, 26% of the world's advertising is spent on cars.<sup>91</sup> The car has remarkably become a global symbol for the Capitalist values of competition, democracy, consumerism and status. These values are not inherently corrupt, but a shift in the way we define these values is necessary.

In Johannesburg, self-contained environments are popularly perceived as secure and exclusive instead of isolating. Despite the post-apocalyptic reality of these environments, as embodied by Ponte City, such spaces can still be thought of as desirable by the middle class! If it is possible to sell and market structures that can be used as prisons *as well as* homes it must be possible to perceive and market public transport as a viable option. The prospects of Gautrain and Rea Vaya provide the structural symbolism of that hope. Only time will tell if people will perceive the new services as real options despite the current blighted view of public transportation.

# **Appendix**

## **Interview questions**

### **UCT Dissertation: Johannesburg Transportation Study**

#### **Instructions:**

**Users of both modes of transport (private car or taxi) should answer questions 1-10. Answer questions 11-20, depending on what mode of transport you regularly use. Use additional paper if necessary. Responses will contribute to the research of developing urban transportation in Johannesburg.**

**Name:**

**Age:**

**Sex:**

**Race (optional):**

**1. What form of transport do you use for your most regular journey? What is the destination of your most regular journey? Consider this mode of transport and trip as you answer the rest of the questions.**

**2. Have you ever felt threatened or scared on a (regular mode of transport)? Discuss some incidents, if any.**

**3. Do you find (regular mode of transport) comfortable? What makes it comfortable or uncomfortable?**

**4. Do you travel with children? If yes, how do you find using the (regular mode of transport) while riding with children?**

**5. Do you feel in control of your journey? How so?**

**6. Do you consider cars prestigious? Does it symbolize anything? If so, what?**

7a. Of these cars which would you like to own? (See page 4 for list of cars) Why? Pick and comment on as many as you like.

b. What do you think other people would think if you had this car?

8. Have you seen cars with another model's decal on it? For example, a Mercedes Benz decal on a combi? Why do you think the car owner has chosen to do that?

9a. What do you think of some of the bumper stickers on taxis?

Example: "I'm on time. Don't rush me..."

"That's a nice perm, but please don't get it on my windows"

"If women were good, God would have one."

b. Can you name any other bumper stickers, or decorations you've seen in taxis?

What do you think of them?

10. On a scale from 1-5 how would you rate your self-esteem? (1= lowest 5= highest)

**Questions 11-14 are for those who use private CAR as their regular mode of transport. Taxi-users SKIP to question 15.**

11. In terms of road accidents, do you feel safe in a car? What is it about the car that makes you feel safe or unsafe in an accident?

12. What *couldn't* you do without a car?

13a. How would you feel if you had to take a taxi?

- b. What ~~would make~~ you switch to a taxi or other means of public transportation such as the Gautrain or Rea Vaya?

14. In your own words, describe the people that use taxis. Describe the people that use cars.

**Questions 15-20 are for those who use TAXIS as their regular mode of transport.**

15. In your own words, describe the people that use taxis. Describe the people that use cars.

16. What *couldn't* you do if you didn't use taxis?

17. How would you feel if you had a car?

18. When a female and a male are sitting at the front of the taxi, why do you think the taxi driver often tells the female passenger to sit between himself and the male passenger?

19. Do you use taxis for long journeys? If so, where to? Many of the longer taxi journeys leave at night. How does that make you feel? What do you do to prepare?

### **SA's top cars as of March 2008**

1. Toyota Yaris
2. Toyota – Corolla Verso/Auris
3. Volkswagen Polo
4. Mercedes-Benz – C Class
5. BMW- 3 Series
6. Volkswagen – CitiGolf
7. Opel – Corsa
8. Toyota – Fortuner
9. Mazda – 2
10. Volkswagen – Golf



## Television commercials

### Opel

Unknown. *Ode to the car.* [Online]

<[http://www.gmsa.com/content\\_data/LAAM/ZA/en/GBPZA/gbl/adverts.html?avdCd=999&sOpt=T#](http://www.gmsa.com/content_data/LAAM/ZA/en/GBPZA/gbl/adverts.html?avdCd=999&sOpt=T#)> [23 Mar 2008].

Shot 1	Narrator: "We love them..." Two children are playing hopscotch on the driveway of a suburban home. Music plays.
Shot 2	Narrator: "...so much.." Suburban home with three car parks.
Shot 3	Narrator: "we build them their own bedrooms." Suburban house with two car parks.
Shot 4	Narrator: "We spoil them." Woman in a black dress walking a large dog on the sidewalk. An orange car with a flame on the side pulls up to the woman. A man is hanging out of the passenger seat. He is clearly staring at the woman.
Shot 5	The dashboard of a decorated car. It is adorned with a Buddha figurine, purple leopard print mat, and car-freshener hanging on the rear-view mirror.
Shot 6	Narrator: "with perfume." Close-up of car-freshener on the rear-view mirror.
Shot 7	Narrator: "We laugh with them. We cry with them." Aerial view of drive-in cinema.
Shot 8	Narrator: "We mess with them." Aerial view of car driving over "Drive Thru" sign painted on the road.
Shot 9	Narrator: "We talk to them." Car keys are on the dashboard of a car. The angle is split between the passenger window and the windshield. It's raining heavily, and there is a man at the window talking and making a 'prayer' gesture with his hands.
Shot 10	Narrator: "We cheat on them." Man in a large car park walks away from one car, and goes to another. A large "Car Rental" sign hangs on the wall.
Shot 11	Narrator: "And swear at them." A car is parked on the street, and has a boot attached to its wheel. A man is kicking the boot.
Shot 12	Frontal view of an old car with a personalized license plate that reads "Pimp."
Shot 13	Narrator: "We christen them." Frontal view of a new car with a personalized license plate that reads "Blonde" written upside down.
Shot 14	Narrator: "We put their pictures on the wall." The camera takes a 180 shot of a room covered with pictures of cars and women in provocative poses.
Shot 15	Narrator: "They come with us on holiday." An interracial family poses for the camera while leaving on the side of their car. A house is behind the car. The family gets into the car and drives off.

Shot 16	Narrator: "We put our lives in their hands" A baby is sitting in a car seat, which is on the driveway of a suburban home. A car is also in the driveway.
Shot 17	Aerial view of an ambulance speeding. Sirens play.
Shot 18	A pregnant woman in the back seat of a car in labor.
Shot 19	Narrator: "We forget about them..." An old rusty car sits at the side of the road. A Child is looking at the car.
Shot 20	Narrator: "abandon them." An old rusty car sits at the side of the road. A Child looks into the car.
Shot 21	A car drives in circles in a parking lot. A wheel has smoke coming from it.
Shot 22	Narrator: "And we abuse them" A car drives through flames on two wheels.
Shot 23	A man is sitting in a garage polishing a wheel while sitting in a wheelchair. An antique car is behind him.
Shot 24	Narrator: "Before we nurse them back to health." A man pulls the cover off an antique car.
Shot 25	Narrator: "We place them on pedestals for all the world to see." A little boy is sitting on the toilet reading a magazine. Shot pans to what the boy is looking at. It is the image of a red car.
Shot 26	Side-view of a car that has hit a lamppost. Water is spewing from a fire hydrant.
Shot 27	Narrator: "They take the blame." The camera zooms out, and a woman is standing in front of the car in shot 26. She is speaking and using hand gestures. The viewer cannot hear the words.
Shot 28	Narrator: "They sleep outside." Aerial view of a car park on the roof of a building in a densely developed area. One car is in the car park. Other tall buildings are visible. It is night.
Shot 29	Narrator: "They take us where we want to go." A car is driving down a road.
Shot 30	Narrator: "And brings us back once we have been." A few people are walking down a dirt road in a rural area. A cemetery is visible.
Shot 31	Narrator: "And life without them we'll never know A car is parked on the side of a road in front of a shop with a glowing "closed" sign. The words "car" and "life" merged on the screen
Shot 32	The Opel logo appears on the screen with a black backdrop.

## **BMW**

Unknown. *Defining innovation*. [Online] <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a7Ny5BYc-Fs>>[23 Mar 2008].

Shot 1	An elderly man is looking out the window of a home. It is raining.
Shot 2	A large sculpture is outside on the shore of a beach.
Shot 3	Man: "My name is Teyo Johnson. I'm a kinetic sculptor." The man is sitting at a table within the home.
Shot 4	Camera flashes to the man outside of the home
Shot 5	The man is back inside of the home. The camera shots that go from inside to outside simulate the thought process of the man.
Shot 6	Man: "My sculptures are made of very light materials and powered by the winds." The sculpture is moving delicately across the shore.
Shot 7	Man: "Part of me, as an engineer, is to map the progress of mobility." The man is inside drafting sketches of the sculpture.
Shot 8	The sculpture is moving on the shore.
Shot 9	The man is inside moving parts of a small wooden structure.
Shot 10	The sculpture is moving on the shore.
Shot 11	Man: "Another part of me as an artist was to sculpt the air that surrounds us and give it shape." The man is on the shore with the sculpture. He is moving parts of the sculpture. The man appears to be testing it.
Shot 12	Man (narrating): "And always- I push the boundaries of what we know and what seems possible to us at this moment in time." The man is outside on the shore.
Shot 13	Man: "The walls between art and engineering exist only in our minds." Man is indoors.
Shot 14	Man: "And few have the imagination to see beyond them." The man and sculpture are outside on the shore.
Shot 15	Text appears on the screen on a black backdrop. "BMW. Defining innovation." The BMQ logo appears. Beneath the logo the words "sheer," "driving" and "pleasure" flash.

## **Volkswagen**

Unknown. *Polo "Landspeed."* [Online] < [http://www.vw.co.za/assets/downloads/tv-commercials/Polo\\_Landspeed.mpg](http://www.vw.co.za/assets/downloads/tv-commercials/Polo_Landspeed.mpg)>[23 Mar 2008].

Shot 1	A black figure with smoke behind it is seen in the distance. It's a bright day in a desert landscape. The moving sound of a plane is heard.
Shot 2	A side-angle view of a long black jet is moving quickly cross the desert sand.
Shot 3	The camera zooms in and out on the fast-moving jet.
Shot 4	The camera maintains focus on the side of the jet. The viewer can hear the muffled sounds of a radio dialogue between pilots.
Shot 5	The camera zooms in on text printed on the side of the jet that reads, "PQ-24."
Shot 6	The camera angle changes to a frontal view of the jet.
Shot 7	The jet picks up speed, and moves out of the camera's view, leaving dust behind it.
Shot 8	It is silent. There is an empty desert landscape.
Shot 9	A man in a white racing suit appears from the left of the screen
Shot 10	The man is standing next to a black car. He takes off his mask.
Shot 11	The text "You'll think you can" appears. The man looks confused, and is scratching his head. An upbeat guitar begins playing
Shot 12	Aerial view of the man and the car. The text "New Polo" appears. Then the VW logo appears.

## Toyota

Unknown. [Online] <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1w9nu9MAPak>> [15 Apr 2008].

Shot 1	A silver car pulls up to the curb, in front of a suburban house. The sound of a car door slamming is heard.
Shot 2	The driver is a young black man. He goes up the stairs of the house.
Shot 3	The driver presses the doorbell.
Shot 4	Another man answers the door.
Shot 5	The two men are standing in the doorway.
Shot 6	The driver begins dancing. Music plays. The lyrics repeat, "Move with me. yeah, move with me."
Shot 7	The man at the door begins looking around, and is confused.
Shot 8	The driver continues dancing.
Shot 9	The driver gives him a Polaroid photograph.
Shot 10	The driver leaves.
Shot 11	The man at the door raises his eyebrows while looking at the photo.
Shot 12	Side angle view of the car driving down a suburban street.
Shot 13	The driver is dancing in front of a male store clerk in a supermarket.
Shot 14	The driver gives the store clerk a Polaroid photograph.
Shot 15	Side angle view of the car driving down a suburban street.
Shot 16	View from the passenger seat of the driver driving the car.
Shot 17	The car pulls up to a men playing basketball at a basketball court in an urban area.
Shot 18	The driver begins dancing in front of one of the players.
Shot 19	The driver gives the player a Polaroid photograph. The player's arms are folded.
Shot 20	Back view of the car driving on the M3 highway. The downtown Johannesburg skyline is visible.
Shot 21	The driver meets a young woman on the pavement of an urban area.
Shot 22	The driver begins dancing.
Shot 23	The driver gives the woman the Polaroid photograph.
Shot 24	Finally, the photo is seen by the viewer from the young woman's perspective. The woman puts the picture down, and the view can see the driver walking back to his car.
Shot 25	The dashboard of the car is shown.
Shot 26	The driver is sitting in the car holding his Palm Pilot. The Palm Pilot screen reads, "Victory Dance List, ex-girlfriend, school bully, old boss, principal." The man crosses off school bully from the list.
Shot 27	The camera focuses on the list.
Shot 28	The young woman is looking at the photo. She appears to be annoyed, and then her eyes light up as if she is surprised.
Shot 29	Narrator: "The New Toyota Yaris. Move on. Move up." The man pulls away. Skidding tires are heard. The young woman is left alone on the pavement as she watches the car pull away. The text, "The New Toyota Yaris. Move on. Move up" appears on the wall of the building behind the young woman.

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